



# MASSIVE STAR WARS CELEBRATION!



20 PAGES OF ACTION FROM A GALAXY FAR, FAR AWAY

# SPY

281

## STAR WARS

### ROGUE ONE

Star **Felicity Jones** and director **Gareth Edwards** on the prequel you've been waiting for

**PLUS!**

Everything you need to know about the **Death Star**

**Why Darth Vader is the greatest villain of all time**

The who's who of **Rogue One**



### SUPERCIRL

STAR INTERVIEW!  
Melissa Benoist talks season two

### DIRK GENTLY

Reopening Douglas Adams' Holistic Detective Agency



THE MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE • COLOSSAL • DAN DARE • INCORPORATED • ANNE RICE  
POWER RANGERS • iZOMBIE • THE FLY • ARRIVAL • DC DOES COMEDY • RON SWANSON!



Future



# WARHAMMER 40,000

## THE BEHEADING THE FINAL VOLUME OF THE BEAST ARISES



THE WAR IS OVER. MANKIND'S ALIEN ENEMIES HAVE BEEN DEFEATED, BUT AT GREAT COST. AS THE SUPERHUMAN SPACE MARINES HEAD OUT INTO THE GALAXY TO DESTROY POCKETS OF RESISTANCE, ONE MAN ON TERRA DECIDES IT'S TIME TO SEIZE POWER...

**HARDBACK | eBook | MP3 AUDIOBOOK OUT NOW**





# THE BEAST ARISES

A 12-PART WARHAMMER 40,000 NOVEL SERIES




A ROUTINE MISSION BECOMES DISASTER FOR THE IMPERIAL FISTS, MANKIND'S SUPREME WARRIORS, WHEN A ALIEN INVASION OF UNPRECEDENTED SIZE APPEARS FROM NOWHERE. AND ON TERRA, POLITICAL MANOEUVRING SLOWS THE RESPONSE. THE SCENE IS SET FOR CARNAGE.

**HARDBACK | eBook | MP3 AUDIOBOOK**



Available from  
[BLACKLIBRARY.COM](http://BLACKLIBRARY.COM)

Download on the  
 **App Store**



# Vectis

AUCTIONS LTD

COLLECTABLE TOY SPECIALISTS

Tuesday 29th November 2016 & Wednesday 30th November 2016

## TV & Star Wars Auction

at Fleck Way, Thornaby, 10.30am - Bid Live at [vectis.co.uk](http://vectis.co.uk)



### Vectis Head Office

FLECK WAY, THORNABY  
STOCKTON-ON-TEES, TS17 9JZ

**Tel: 01642 750616**

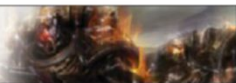
### Vectis Oxford Office

Unit 5A, West End Industrial Estate  
Witney, Oxon, OX28 1UB

**Tel: 01993 709424**

Dates are correct at time of print but are subject to change  
**please check [www.vectis.co.uk](http://www.vectis.co.uk) for updates**



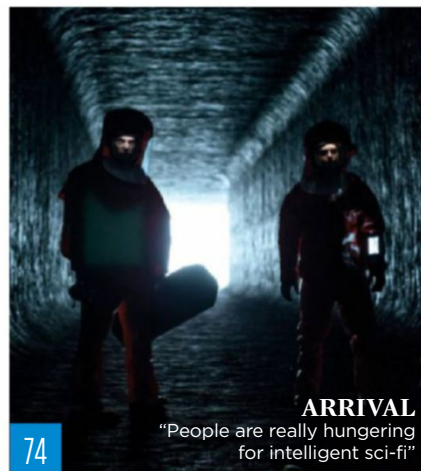


## ROGUE ONE: A STAR WARS STORY

"I didn't want to purely  
make a war film"



46



### ARRIVAL

"People are really hungry  
for intelligent sci-fi"

74



### SUPERGIRL

"It's like being a little kid when  
you have your action figures"

78

## FEATURES

### 46 ROGUE ONE: A STAR WARS STORY

With the latest movie in the *Star Wars* universe opening soon, we roll out the red carpet for 16 pages of glorious coverage. Besides interviews with the director and the star, we've bits on the Death Star, Darth Vader, spin-offs and loads more. Feel the Force!

### 64 STAR WARS: IDENTITIES

The new *Star Wars* exhibition set to storm London.

### 68 RUFUS SEWELL

The man from *The Man In The High Castle*.

### 70 VERTIGO COMICS

The fascinating history of one of the world's most exciting comics imprints.

### 74 ARRIVAL

The aliens are hovering... We take a look at the cerebral new sci-fi flick.

### 78 SUPERGIRL

Returning for a second series, can the Maid of Might soar to greater heights? We say yes as we talk to the makers.

### 82 KEN LIU

The Chinese-American author who's pushing the boundaries of SF literature.

### 84 INCORPORATED

New future-set TV thriller that looks at life when the big corporations have taken over.

### 88 THE FLY

Remembering David Cronenberg's remake of the '50s monster movie.

### ► RED ALERT (NEWS)

#### 9 DIRK GENTLY

The US reboot is here.

#### 20 POWER RANGERS

It's coming to the big screen so we break down the trailer.

### ► FIRST CONTACT

#### 32 YOUR LETTERS

Our Hot Topic? *Red Dwarf*. Our slightly less hot (but still warm) topics? *Kubo*, *Trek*, *Obi-Wan*.

#### 36 WISHLIST

What you guys and gals want in Ben Affleck's *Batman* movie.

### ► REVIEWS

#### 94 DOCTOR STRANGE

Did we think the new Marvel movie was kind of magic?

#### 100 STAR TREK BEYOND

As it arrives on disc, our thoughts on the latest *Trek*.

### ► VIEWSCREEN

#### 124 RED DWARF XI

The return of the space cowboys. Was it worth the wait?

### ► REGULARS

#### 40 OPINION

Chinese author Cixin Liu on sci-fi in his homeland.

#### 42 BOOK CLUB

Joanne Harris on *Wasp* by Eric Frank Russell.

#### 129 BLASTERMIND

Try our sequels quiz. We might do another one next year.

#### 130 TOTAL RECALL

The Beatles' half-remembered excursion into fantasy telly.

# SUBSCRIBE TO SFX!

Check out p44 for details



# The wait is over!



Exclusive  
edition with  
the short story  
"King of  
the Rats"

Back in London.  
Back in trouble.

## Peter Grant is back on the case.

Buy it at your local Waterstones or [Waterstones.com](http://Waterstones.com)

Exclusive edition available while stocks last

Discover Ben Aaronovitch's *Sunday Times* bestselling series



[www.gollancz.co.uk](http://www.gollancz.co.uk)



## Rants & Raves

INSIDE THE SFX HIVE MIND

### RICHARD EDWARDS EDITOR

#### RAVES

→ Loving *Westworld* – I'm amazed a series based on a fun, but undeniably shallow, sci-fi movie has found so much depth.

#### RANTS

→ I'm not sure how long I'll be sticking with *The Walking Dead*. The season seven premiere felt like it was teetering into torture porn territory.



### NICK SETCHFIELD FEATURES EDITOR

#### RAVES

→ Loved *Raiders! The Story Of The Greatest Fan Film Ever Made*, the documentary about the kids who remade Indiana Jones on VHS in the '80s. Inspiring, hilarious and moving.

#### RIP

→ Sad to hear of the loss of Steve Dillon. One of the British comic book industry's authentic greats.



### IAN BERRIMAN REVIEWS EDITOR

#### RAVES

→ Delighted that you can now download a few episodes of *The Adventure Game* – I want a DVD box set!

→ Love the title sequence of *Class*. Very *Tomorrow People*!

#### RANTS

→ How could Ram attack the Shadow Kin leader? He'd have had to hop down a corridor with one leg chopped off, bleeding to death!



### JOSH WINNING NEWS EDITOR

#### RAVES

→ Finally watched *Dune*. Joyfully awful nonsense with some hella quotable one-liners ("I'm the housekeeper").

→ Korean horror *The Wailing* is a subtle, eerie masterpiece.

→ Also loved Studio Ghibli's *The Red Turtle*, out next year. As beautifully understated as anything the studio's ever made.



### RUSSELL LEWIN PRODUCTION EDITOR

#### RAVES

→ Almost us, *The Greasy Strangler* was extraordinary. Never seen anything like it before; probably my film of the year.

→ It's science rather than science fiction but I'd heartily recommend Werner Herzog's documentary *Lo And Behold*.

→ Well, *Class* isn't as bad as early *Torchwood* is all I can say.



### JONATHAN COATES ART EDITOR

#### RAVES

→ *Red Dwarf XI* has been an absolute joy; "Krysis" being my standout episode.

→ Johnny Cash's "Hurt" certainly adds some poignancy to the *Logan* trailer. Hope the movie lives up to it.

→ Could the Duffer Brothers turn *Raiders! The Story Of The Greatest Fan Film Ever Made* into a movie? Or Spielberg? That'd be meta!



### CLIFF NEWMAN ART EDITOR

#### RAVES

→ The *New Logan* trailer looks ace.

#### RANTS

→ *The Walking Dead* is dead to me. I'm not interested in characters being used as cannon fodder. It seems that every time one shows any signs of hope or happiness they're immediately beaten or torn to death. I can despair no more.



### WILL SALMON SPECIALS EDITOR

#### RAVES

→ Finished my rewatch of *Lost*. It's (broadly) fantastic and works beautifully when watched together.

→ *Horrorville* #2 and *Comic Heroes* #29 are both out now.

→ Dreadful news about Steve Dillon. Rest in peace a true comics legend.



### LOUISE BLAIN WRITER

#### RAVES

→ Feeling really positive about *American Horror Story: Roanoke* with its hyper meta layers of mock-doc horror. Just hoping it doesn't jump the shark *again* halfway through the season.

→ If you want some true scares, hunt down *Until Dawn: Rush Of Blood* for PlayStation VR. I'm still having nightmares.



### STEPHEN KELLY WRITER

#### RAVES

→ I'm a big fan of *Westworld* and *Humans*, TV shows that make you ask the big questions about AI – like, "Would I bang a robot?"

#### RANTS

→ New *Doctor Who* spin-off *Class* wasn't made for me and that's fine. But there's still something weird about the Doctor in a show with blood and wanking.



I wasn't quite old enough to experience the torture of the three-year gap between *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return Of The Jedi*. It sounds like agony, so I feel rather lucky there's just 13 months until we learn what Luke Skywalker says to Rey. Even better, this December we have *Rogue One*, a whole extra movie to plug the gap. There may come a time when Disney's one-a-year strategy leaves us thinking we've hit peak *Star Wars*, but we're light years from reaching that point yet.

*Rogue One* comes with extra interest because it's the first standalone "anthology" movie. Everything we've seen suggests that this story of the Rebel spies who stole those famous Death Star plans is going to be an exciting, faithful recreation of *A New Hope's* era. And as befits the biggest film of 2016, we've assembled our biggest feature of the year (p46) – we've interviewed director Gareth Edwards and star Felicity Jones, caught up with a designer of the original Death Star, and loads more besides. I also took a trip to the *Star Wars Identities* exhibition (p64) – that's where I had the close encounter with Mr Vader above.

But *Rogue One* isn't the end of the great sci-fi this year. Next issue features our epic 2017 preview and the return of a certain Time Lord – subscribe to *SFX* now and make sure you never miss an issue. All the details are on p44.



See me on page 62

Rich

Richard Edwards, Editor  
@RichDEdwards



JAMES  
BOND  
COLLECTOR  
FIGURES

COMING  
SOON  




[bigchiefstudios.co.uk](http://bigchiefstudios.co.uk)



THE  
FUTURE  
FIRST!

In association with  
**BIG CHIEF**  
STUDIOS LTD.  
www.bigchiefstudios.co.uk

# Red Alert

JANUARY  
2017

→ NEWS /// INTERVIEWS /// INSIGHT /// RICE → *edited by Josh Winning*

CREATOR EXCLUSIVE

## GENTLY DOES IT

Max Landis talks  
about adapting  
Douglas Adams's  
*Dirk Gently's  
Holistic  
Detective  
Agency*



**"I have too much respect for**

Douglas Adams to try to do some bullshit, half-assed version of one of his books," declares Max Landis, writer of the found-footage superhero movie *Chronicle*, and *American Ultra*. "You would have to lose stuff and there isn't anything you could lose without hurting it and changing what it is."

These are reassuring words from Landis given that he's also creator of a new BBC →

### Highlights



16

#### DEAD SET

→ Everybody hide your brain –cult comic adap *iZombie* is back for a third season.



19

#### WAY WAY BACK

→ Gerard Way reveals furr-tastic new DC imprint Young Animal.



24

#### SPACE INVADER

→ Our very own pilot of the future Dan Dare returns in a new audio play.



**SCI-FACT!** In the original Douglas Adams novel of *Dirk Gently's Holistic Detective Agency*, Gently gave his real name as Svlad Cjelli.

America series named after Adams's 1987 novel, *Dirk Gently's Holistic Detective Agency*. It's unsurprising that he holds Adams in such high esteem, though, because it was the second Dirk Gently novel that got him hooked on the author of *The Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy*.

"Oh my god, I'll never forget," Landis tells Red Alert. "I was at summer camp when I was 13 and it had a little library of books. You could take them out and they were all messed up. One of the only books that was less messed up was *The Long Dark Tea-Time Of The Soul* and when I read it I couldn't tell from minute to minute what was going to happen next."

Factor in Gently's mantra that all things are fundamentally interconnected and Landis looks like the inevitable choice to script a TV show about Adams's supernatural sleuth. After all, he's part of the creative team behind the Dirk Gently comic books published by IDW, which shares the TV rights with Ideate Media. Ideate's Head of Production, meanwhile, is Arvind Ethan David, writer of IDW's Dirk Gently titles *The Salmon Of Doubt* – which is what Adams's unfinished third Gently novel was called – and

“It's like *The Big Lebowski* or *Inherent Vice* collided with *Doctor Who*”

*A Spoon Too Short*. "Arvind is probably the biggest Dirk Gently fan there is," says Landis. "He thought of me when the rights to the show came up and I immediately said, 'Yes.'"

Notwithstanding the pedigree of the people involved, however, this new interpretation might surprise fans who know the books inside out. "Whereas all of the previous incarnations have been perfectly happy to simply adapt the characters and the story, I'm not content to do that," says Landis. "This is meant to be a new entry in the Douglas Adams ephemera."

The incarnations that Landis refers to are two BBC radio series starring Harry Enfield as Dirk Gently and a short-lived BBC Four series with Stephen Mangan in the title role. All of these were well received. Nonetheless, the BBC's last attempt to put Gently on TV didn't satisfy Landis. "No sitting on it, but the area where it kind of failed for me was that it ultimately didn't commit to how insane the books are," Landis admits. "It settled with being a sort of quirky detective show but if you read the books, that's not what Dirk Gently is."

Landis, along with showrunner Robert Cooper (*Stargate*), has tackled this by taking an Adams-like wild swing at something new. "One

Show creator Max Landis is a lifelong fan of Adams's books.



hundred per cent all I set out to do was to impart those exact qualities because adapting the books was impossible," he reveals. "Adapting the feel and the tone is something I believed in myself to do and I think that the thing that our show does to great success is that you never know where it's going to go next."

With his exaggerated quiff, IDW's Gently is trendier than Adams's bespectacled one. The comics also relocate him from England to America. Landis has taken a similar route with the new series, casting British actor Samuel Barnett (*Penny Dreadful*) as Gently alongside Elijah Wood, and setting the series in Seattle. Landis believes that Gently fans will buy his approach because they'll agree that there was no other way. "I feel like most people who love Dirk Gently would be relieved that we didn't try to do the real story because I certainly love Dirk Gently and I know, just in my experience in TV, that trying to tell that story is almost impossible," Landis explains.

In describing the eight-part series, Landis jokes, "It's like *The Big Lebowski* or *Inherent Vice* collided with *Doctor Who*." He's reluctant to be more specific, however. "All of the things I would reveal here would be spoilers," he insists. Still, he suggests that while we won't see Thor or The Electric Monk, Adams's influence will be evident throughout.

"You're introduced to a bunch of characters in a bunch of locations with very little information ever about how they might later connect and because this is Douglas Adams, the ways they connect have no rules," Landis teases. "You can go as crazy and convoluted and ridiculous as you want as long as you still have fun." ●

*Dirk Gently's Holistic Detective Agency* comes to UK Netflix in December. It's currently airing on BBC America in the US.



Wait a minute, we thought the short-sleeves-over-long-sleeves trend had passed?





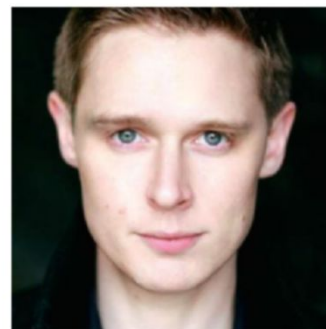
Jade Eshete plays security officer Farah Black.



The new TARDIS console room did not go down well.

## INTERCONNECTED DETECTIVE

Samuel Barnett on becoming Douglas Adams's pizza-loving private eye...



### How would you describe your Dirk Gently?

→ I feel it's got the essence and the spirit of the Dirk in the books. I feel Max has really captured that. But obviously I think I look very different to the Dirk that Douglas Adams created, who was more middle-aged, slightly portly.

### Did you review how other actors have played Dirk Gently?

→ I listened to both seasons of the radio adaptation with Harry Enfield and I watched all the episodes Stephen Mangan had done and I really loved both of them. In fact, I was slightly going, "These are really good." When it was announced that I'd got the job there were loads of people on Twitter saying, "What happened to Steven Mangan? Why can't we have more shows with him because he was great?" and I was thinking, "Yeah, in a way I totally agree with you."

### How does the show introduce Gently to a new generation?

→ What's great is that you don't need to know anything. One of the things I really love about American TV and the way it's written is the plotting. They are able to plot one story that keeps you completely hanging on because they drip feed the information to you. In our version you'll see Dirk go about his business, get it all wrong because he's chaotic and you don't learn much about him straight away apart from how he operates. Then suddenly, in episode three, you get this scene where you get a tiny bit of backstory about him and go, "What was that? Where did that come from?"

### What was it like working with Elijah Wood?

→ They needed someone who could bring a lot of heart and a lot of empathy but also a real groundedness and normality because otherwise you would have a show in which there would be no anchor; there would be no one to guide you through where you should be at any given moment in the story. Elijah will never tell you what to think and feel and he won't spoon-feed you anything, but he will kind of guide you in the same way that Todd ends up really guiding Dirk.



**SCI-FACT!** One-time *High School Musical* star Vanessa Hudgens admits she can't help singing on set.

TV EXCLUSIVE

## POWER OUTAGE

In new TV series *Powerless*, we meet the unsung heroes of the DC Universe...

➔ **With so many superhero stories** dominating screens these days, you might start to wonder what it's like to be an average person living among the superhumans catapulting themselves between skyscrapers every day. It's a question that writer Ben Queen used to create a whole series, *Powerless*. Set in the DC Universe, it follows a group of insurance claims adjusters who deal with the aftermath and collateral damage of constant superhero battles. "Frankly, how do you get to work in the morning when you are dealing with super-related craziness like a tidal wave from Aquaman?" Queen muses. "The aggravation of that seemed like a funny thing to explore."

Despite the tongue-in-cheek approach, Queen – who previously worked on short-lived legal sci-fi drama *Century City* – says DC Comics was wholeheartedly on board from his first pitch. "They were very encouraging and opened up the candy store for us in terms of

what we can reference and what we can do," he tells Red Alert. "Right now, when we reference a character or an event, we want it to be something people can relate to, and laugh at. We're using less-recognisable superheroes, but that doesn't mean they don't deal with Green Lantern-related insurance claims."

That means, of course, that DC Universe fans should keep their peepers peeled. "In every

episode, there are obscure Easter Eggs for comic-book fans," Queen promises. "DC has been awesome about it, from Big Belly Burger [a fictional DC fast food chain] to Lex Luthor's autobiography, and beautiful Alex Ross drawings that double as photographs on the cover of *Rolling Stone*."

However, Queen is quick to point out the series is really about the parallels experienced by average heroes, like Hudgens's forthright Emily Locke who takes it upon herself to wage her own battle against their new manager, Del (Tudyk), who wants to deny more claims to win points from his CEO father. The rapport among the cast is what solidified the concept for Queen. "We found these actors and went after them. We wanted them to be people you could love and get behind. So when Vanessa became available, everything locked together for our cast. Danny Pudi, we were lucky to get him because he's crazy funny. And Alan Tudyk is amazing."



Danny Pudi's Teddy is keen on clapping too.



“In every episode, there are obscure Easter Eggs for comic-book fans”



Vanessa Hudgens and Alan Tudyk: dressing smart even if they're not superheroes.

A newbie to television comedy, Hudgens admits she's got a learning curve when it comes to superheroes too. "I didn't grow up a big comic book person, so I have some homework cut out for me, but I love [Emily] because she's standing for the fact that you don't need superpowers to be a powerful person. She wants to help people. It's her way of making the world a better place, one claim at a time." ●

*Powerless will air on NBC in the US in 2017. A UK broadcaster is TBC.*

“DON'T QUOTE ME”

“STAR TREK, LIKE ANY GOOD STORY, SAYS THAT WE'RE ALL COMPLICATED, AND WE'VE ALL GOT A LITTLE BIT OF SPOCK AND A LITTLE BIT OF KIRK, MAYBE SOME KLINGON IN US, RIGHT?”

Barack Obama knows his geek trivia.



## AERIAL ASSAULT SCI-FI TV ROUND UP

→ **War Of The Worlds** is coming to the small screen courtesy of *Teen Wolf* showrunners Jeff Davis and Andrew Cochran.

→ **BrainDead**, Mary Elizabeth Winstead's alien parasite comedy, won't be getting a second season.

→ **The Expanse**, the show based on James SA Corey's books, is now streaming in full on UK Netflix.

→ **The Walking Dead** will live to shuffle another day – season eight has been confirmed.

→ Ben Barnes will play Jigsaw in the **Punisher** Netflix series.

→ *Doctor Who* director Euros Lyn will helm episode one of the **Let The Right One In** TV series.

→ Cameron Cuffe has been cast as Superman's grandpa in Syfy's **Krypton** series.

→ *What We Do in The Shadows* is getting its own six-episode series called **Paranormal Event Response Unit**.

→ “Think Mulder & Scully but in a country where nothing happens,” says Taika Waititi.



## NICK OFFERMAN

THE *PARKS AND RECREATION* STAR AND CARPENTER SHARES HIS PERSONAL BEST

### Favourite SF/fantasy film

→ The first film that took me was *Explorers*. These kids end up constructing a spaceship to go into outer space and it's kind of like a sci-fi *Stand By Me*. It explores that notion of if you have a weird idea that grown ups don't believe, that doesn't mean it's not true. And sure enough you and your friends can get to outer space. Because you're special [laughs]!

### Favourite SF/fantasy TV

→ On and off I've loved a lot of *Doctor Who*. I was like, “Oh, here's the weirdest thing most likely to get me beat up on the playground. So guys, let me tell you about a TARDIS...”

### Favourite SF/fantasy book

→ After a lifetime of scotch and marijuana it's interesting to try to dive into the card catalogue, but I'm going to pull out a title that's a little more obscure and that is the *Illuminatus! Trilogy*. It's really trippy and open-minded political sci-fi trash involving the Illuminati and the New World Order. It's quite funny but also deadly serious.

### Favourite SF/fantasy games

→ I played a lot of *D&D* as a kid and that was a gateway game. When I got to theatre school, I met these good friends of mine who now have this amazing company, the HP Lovecraft Historical Society. We started playing a role-playing game called *Cthulhu Lives* and suddenly we just came into our manhood as LARPer. It was the most terrifying and thrilling thing I've ever been involved with.

*Good Clean Fun* by Nick Offerman is out in November from Dutton.





**SCI-FACT!** When Anne Rice originally wrote *Interview With The Vampire*, she created Lestat with Rutger Hauer in mind.

Queen of the Damned:  
Vampire Chronicles  
author Anne Rice.

**AUTHOR EXCLUSIVE**

## STAKE OUT

Interview with the writer: Anne Rice talks  
*Prince Lestat And The Realms Of Atlantis...*

➔ It's been 40 years since Louis first gave a reporter the exclusive of several lifetimes. Since then, bestselling author Anne Rice has turned her attention to Lestat, the iconic antihero of that interview, time and time again. Now, with new instalment *Prince Lestat And The Realms Of Atlantis* hitting shelves this month, it's time to draw blood from this particular vampire again.

"This new novel flows directly from Prince Lestat," Rice explains. "We find he is now the acknowledged Prince of the Vampires. He's trying to transform from being a rebel to a responsible ruler when he is confronted by a new and mysterious group of beings." The beings in question are linked to the legend of Atlantis; they are an all-powerful force for Lestat and his vampire legion to tackle.

"I'd been working on a novel about the lost kingdom of Atlantis for a long time," Rice continues. "The myth has always haunted me, but the novel was not coming together. Then it occurred to me to connect my vision of

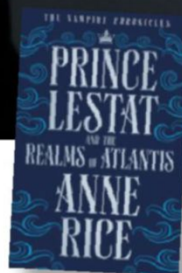
ancient Atlantis with the vampires. It proved so powerful a mix for me that the novel poured out like lava."

This new instalment is the second to be released following Rice's hiatus from *The Vampire Chronicles*. *Blood Canticle* in 2003 was planned to be the last one in the series, but after 11 years of "freedom", Rice felt compelled to continue Lestat's story again.

"I thought of new and positive stories with Lestat," she reveals. "He was no longer associated only with pain and despair. I began to see a way for Lestat to love again, and for him to respond to the young vampires all around him."

And what of the future of *The Vampire Chronicles*? "Lestat is alive to me; he's real in a way no other character I ever wrote about is real," Rice explains. "I don't think I will ever stop writing about Lestat again." ●

*Prince Lestat And The Realms Of Atlantis* is published by Chatto & Windus on 29 November.

**AUTHOR EXCLUSIVE**

## LOST AND FOUND

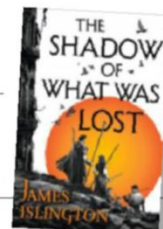
James Islington introduces his epic new fantasy saga

➔ War-torn landscapes, gifted youngsters, centuries-long power struggles... Those tropes will be familiar to many fantasy fans, but they're given a gritty dust-down in James Islington's debut novel, *The Shadow Of What Was Lost*. Following student Davian, the first book in *The Licanus Trilogy* sees him heading off on a dangerous journey. "It's not long before he finds out there are dark, violent forces actively pursuing him and his friends," Islington tells Red Alert. "So yes – there's plenty of magic, blood and fighting throughout!"

Hailing from Australia, the author spent his twenties running a tech start-up before he returned to his teenhood passion for writing. He started scribbling *The Shadow Of What Was Lost* on his 30th birthday and, five years later, it's finally hitting shelves, with Islington aiming to infuse his series with the "amazing sense of scope, deep history and epic stakes" that he loved in Robert Jordan's *Wheel Of Time* books.

And with a whole trilogy mapped out ("I know exactly how the story ends, but I do leave room for things to shift around"), he's already hard at work on book two, *An Echo Of Things To Come*, out mid-2017. "I'm in the process of editing it right now," he reveals. "It's a little darker than *Shadow*, with the central conflict of the series really starting to come into play." Sounds epic to us. ●

*The Shadow Of What Was Lost* is released by Orbit on 10 November.





**SCI-FACT!** Fady previously played one of the “familiars” who serve vampires in *Penny Dreadful*.



## FIVE MINUTES WITH... FADY ELSAYED

The rising star whose *Class* character suffers a terrible trauma

### BETTERING RAM

“My character’s cool. Ram’s a loving, caring young man who’s very driven, very passionate, and always wants to be the best at everything. I’m really just trying to find myself and become me again – trying to be the best again.”

### SUIT YOU, SIR

“When I went for the recall, my agent sent me the wrong [script] sides. I’d prepared two scenes – I even went in with a suit, because we were preparing a prom. Patrick [Ness] was like, ‘Why are you wearing a suit?’ ‘I thought it would be good for the scene.’ ‘You’re not even doing that scene!’ It turns out I had five, six scenes to learn!”

### BROTHERS IN ARMS

“The fans are so sweet. You can tell how religious and passionate they are about *Doctor Who*. It’s such an honour to be a part of something like that. I worked with Noel Clarke on *Brotherhood*, and he congratulated me straight away and told me what I was getting involved in.”

### ZOOM WITH A VIEW

“I take pictures of everything, and you have to be really careful. I once posted a picture that had nothing to do with characters, but someone managed to zoom in and found one of the actors who was in it. The picture was so pixellated I don’t even know how they managed to figure out who it was!”

### ALL BACK TO MINE

“I’ve never gelled with a team as much as I have on this. I’ve never had actors come round to my house, or even wanted to hang out with other actors – it’s always been very professional. We’re always having fun and motivating each other. It’s been a great experience.”

*Class is available online on BBC Three now.*





**SCI-FACT!** We'll see more of Aly Michalka in season three of *iZombie*; she's been promoted to series regular. Woo!



**Liv Moore's life as a secret zombie certainly**

hasn't been boring, and according to executive producer Rob Thomas, there's plenty more for her to struggle with in *iZombie*'s third season. With zombie-making energy drink company Max Rager a thing of the past, Liv (Rose McIver) will find herself facing a brand new Big Bad. "In their place is a new organisation that we met in the season two finale: Fillmore Graves," Thomas reveals. "It's a Blackwater-like military contractor, except they are all zombies. They are essentially preparing for the day when humans discover that zombies are walking among them. They want Liv to be part of the organisation. So in season three, the bad guys are more murky. They're asking a real question of Liv: when the day comes when you have to choose between humans or zombies, what side are you on?"

Embracing who she is now plays a big part of the season's dilemma for Liv, which actress Rose McIver says she's looking forward to exploring. "I think the cure has become a conflict," she admits. "Liv doesn't want to eat brains, or not be able to have children. There are distinct reasons why being a zombie is inconvenient, but it's a big part of her identity now. She's found a lot of purpose and meaning by helping people."

In the meantime, Liv also has to contend with her former fiancé, Major Lilywhite (Robert Buckley), returning to his own zombie status after his "cure" wore off. Now they're brain-eating comrades-in-arms, which McIver says opens the door for a lot of comedy. "Episode two has me eating the brain of a protective father who has an angsty daughter whose brain is eaten by Major. It's going to be great. Buckley playing a teenage daughter is going to be a howler," she laughs.

"Their dynamic lends itself to a lot of comedy. Plus our big season arc is developing. We have some great interwoven stories now, so the brains can serve that instead of being just procedural."

But don't worry, Thomas confirms the show's "brain-of-the-week" format isn't going anywhere. "It's so much fun and we like that there is a sense of conclusion at the end of every show," he says. "We like the occasional 'no case of the week', but it's the rarity." ●

*iZombie* season three will air on The CW in 2017.



**TV EXCLUSIVE**

## CORPSE PRIDE

Digging into the guts of *iZombie* season three with Rose McIver...





# AKIRA

COLLECTOR'S EDITION  
BLU-RAY + DVD + DIGITAL COPY

**OUT NOVEMBER 28**  
PRE-ORDER NOW!

**hmv**  
in-store | online



©1988 MASHROOM/ AKIRA COMMITTEE. All Rights Reserved.

while stocks last.



**SCI-FACT!** It was Halloween during the shoot, and Nacho Vigalondo dressed up in "a cheap leopard-skin type catsuit, with ears".

## 5 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT...

# COLOSSAL

**Anne Hathaway** teams with *Timecrimes* director Nacho Vigalondo for a mind-controlled-monster movie. Red Alert gets the scoop

### MAKING A MONSTER MOVIE WAS A DREAM COME TRUE FOR NACHO VIGALONDO

**1** "I can't avoid the fear that I'll stop making movies at some point," Spanish director Vigalondo confides to Red Alert when we meet at the Toronto International Film Festival. "So somehow, any time I get to make a movie, I try to fulfil a dream, in case I stop making films." The latest tick on his bucket list is a giant kaiju movie, albeit with a twist. *Colossal*, which premiered at TIFF, sees recovering alcoholic Gloria (Anne Hathaway) discovering that she has a bizarre, psychic connection with the monster that's suddenly started appearing in Seoul.

### IT WAS WEIRDLY EASY TO MAKE

**2** "Honestly, I feel like making movies is never easy," says Vigalondo. "In this case, it's been kind of easy." Production company Voltage Pictures boosted the budget after seeing an early cut so that more could be made of the Korean sequences, and having a star like Hathaway on board helped. The *Dark Knight Rises* actress was convinced after checking out his early work. "I realised he could pull off all these ambitious and crazy ideas that were [in the script]," she says.

Co-star Jason Sudeikis, who plays Gloria's bar-owner friend, adds, "I watched a collection of [his short films]. After the first three I was like, 'Oh, this guy can do it.'"

### VIGALONDO LOVES TO TWIST GENRES

**3** *Timecrimes*, *Extraterrestrial*... Vigalondo likes to subvert sci-fi tropes in his work, and *Colossal* is no different. It plays like a small-budget mumblecore movie crossed with *Pacific Rim*, and the fact that the US characters continue with their lives while disaster rages on in Seoul adds a bizarre realism. "From a childish point of view, [flipping the genre] makes me alive for the process," says Vigalondo. "But when I make a movie that changes the tropes or uses the tropes in a twisted way, I know some people will not enjoy it."

### HIS DIRECTION IS... ODD

**4** Perhaps unsurprising, given his bonkers back catalogue, but Vigalondo gives some bizarre on-set notes to his actors. "It's kind of synaesthetic in that he's abstract," says Hathaway. "He'll come up to you and be like, 'I really saw the colour blue when I wrote this

scene.' I'll walk away and be like, 'Oh...'" Sudeikis agrees. "He's that 12-year-old you see in the playground and go, 'What's he doing?' You're really curious about him." He has a unique way to destress too. "Nacho would just pull out comic books," adds Hathaway. "That was his way of handling it and staying calm." "Or playing iPad games," butts in Sudeikis, "he's a big gamer."

### THE FILM IS OPEN TO INTERPRETATION

**5** The premise might be bizarre, but *Colossal* resonates deeply under the surface. Many critics who saw the film in Toronto praised the underlying feminist connotations, as the men in Gloria's life project their ideals on her. "When we were making it, I thought it was a movie about addiction," admits Hathaway, "but I missed all that." Vigalondo describes himself as a "feminist ally" but doesn't want to label the film. "I just want it to live by itself," he says. "I want the movie to be its own statement. I don't want to politicise the audience." ●

*Colossal* played at the 2016 Toronto International Film Festival and is expected to open next year.



**SCI-FACT!** Created by Ed Harron and Bruno Premiani, Cave Carson first appeared in August 1960's *The Brave And The Bold* #31.

NEW AUTHOR

## KATHERINE ARDEN

MIXES HISTORICAL  
EVENTS WITH RUSSIAN  
FAIRYTALES



### Describe the world of *The Bear And The Nightingale*...

→ The bulk takes place in a village in Muscovy – now Moscow and its surrounding region – in the 14th century. My heroine's the daughter of a minor aristocrat and also the heir of a powerful and possibly magical lineage. She's able to see the world in a way others don't, which puts her at odds with her people – but might also be the only way she can save them.

### What's the appeal of Russian fairytales?

→ I love the vivid tropes and characters: the firebird, the immortal sorcerer Kaschei the Deathless, magic horses. These things have a half-familiar strangeness I find enchanting. Also, often it's the female character who's the magical one, the clever one, who saves the day. I feel like women in western fairy tales often suit some ideal of passivity.

### How long did the book take to write?

→ It took a year to draft, but then it evolved beyond recognition. I did final edits five years after sitting down to draft the original version. I divided my first draft in two and completely rewrote the first half, and that became *The Bear And The Nightingale*!

### Which authors would you like to be compared to in a dream review?

→ Well, dream big I suppose! Tolkien, Philip Pullman, and because my writer DNA has a large chunk of historical fiction, Dorothy Dunnett.

*The Bear And The Nightingale* is published by Del Rey on 12 January.



## CREATOR EXCLUSIVE

# THE WAY FORWARD

Gerard Way gets his claws into DC's new cutting edge imprint, *Young Animal*



### Having interned at DC when he was

just 16, My Chemical Romance front-man Gerard Way has come full circle by returning to curate the publisher's new mature readers imprint, Young Animal. Taking its lead from the alternate superheroes of 1990s Vertigo comics, the quartet of titles launched last month with Way's revival of *Doom Patrol*, which takes its inspiration from Grant Morrison's classic run.

But for the Michael Avon Oeming-illustrated *Cave Carson Has A Cybernetic Eye*, Way and co-writer Jon Rivera are delving even further back into comic-book history after discovering an entry for the little-known Silver Age character in the *DC Comics Encyclopedia*.

"I was like, 'Who's Cave Carson?' and the only information in there aside from him being an expert geologist and pretty decent at hand-to-hand combat was the fact that he had a cybernetic eye," says Way, comparing it to his creator-owned Dark Horse series, *Umbrella Academy*. "I brought a lot of the energy of *Umbrella Academy* to Cave Carson. It's a bit of a slow burn and it's really about the relationships between the characters. It's also about a character who has had a heyday and

a grey middle period, and is now coming back to adventuring, so it's definitely similar in that respect as well."

Along with overseeing Cecil Castellucci and Marley Zarcone's *Shade, The Changing Girl*, Way has also co-created *Mother Panic* with writer Jody Houser and artist Tommy Lee Edwards. Centring around heiress-turned-vigilante Violet Paige, it plays on Batman's secret identity.

"I was thinking about all the things that Bruce Wayne does to cover his tracks, so that he can be Bruce Wayne, such as drinking non-alcoholic champagne and hanging out with lots of women," explains Way. "I thought, what if your cover was way more hardcore than that? What if you really were drinking alcohol and had a lot of anger issues? I wanted to have some fun with the Bruce Wayne mythology and find out what would happen if somebody younger and more current had the same resources that Bruce Wayne does." ●

*Cave Carson Has A Cybernetic Eye* is out now from DC Comics/Young Animal. *Mother Panic* is out on 9 November.

The imprint includes a "reimagining" of classic DC team Doom Patrol.





Red Alert Jan 2017

# Freeze Frame

Top trailers dissected

**SCI-FACT!** The TV show's Blue Ranger was named after Bryan Cranston, who voices Morph in the film.

# POWER RANGERS

OUT  
24 MAR  
2017

It's morphin' time as a group of outsiders get a mighty makeover...



Meet Jason (Dacre Montgomery), here eyeing the smashed windscreen of a car we're led to believe he played a nice game of piñata with.



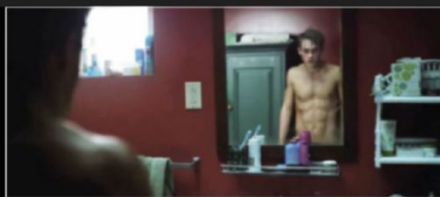
Now he has to matriculate with "all these weirdos and criminals" (his pa's words), having landed in a Losers' Club for juvenile delinquents.



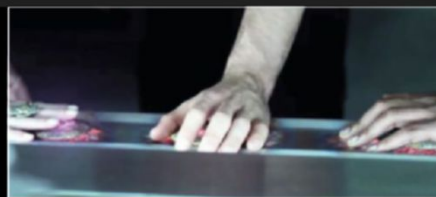
Meanwhile, Kimberly (Naomi Scott) is bullied in the school toilets and takes a pair of scissors to her locks. Much quicker than therapy.



The Losers' Club visit a restricted area and discover what looks like a downed spaceship containing multi-coloured asteroid crystals.



"Something happened up there, okay!" Jason has his Peter Parker moment in front of a mirror, having inexplicably developed super-abs.



Having taken their crystals to school, the Losers discover they're capable of all kinds of metaphysical mischief.



Jason tests out his new powers by leaping over a ravine. Then suggests the others try, too, which Billy (RJ Cyler) isn't too happy about.



Jason and Kimberly get cosy (apparently acquiring superpowers is horny business) amid a montage of exploding cars and action poses.



Just when you thought things were looking a bit too happy, enter Rita Repulsa (Elizabeth Banks), who hisses: "I've killed Rangers before."



Cue what looks like one heck of a catfight as Rita whisks Kimberly out of bed and starts slamming her around like a rag doll.



But don't worry, the Rangers have discovered what looks like an important part of the ship, and don't seem concerned that it seems set to explode.



Luckily it just spews out some plasma that turns Jason into Iron Man. Or, uh, Red Ranger. Bye-bye Losers, hello intergalactic superheroes!

## The Buzz



**MATT LOOKER** Things I see all the time in movies: moody teens, special powers. Things I don't see enough: ninjas in bright jumpsuits. I'd be so much more excited if they went the other way.



**TARA BENNETT** Not what I was expecting from a *Power Rangers* trailer - I figured there would be more candy-coloured cheesiness, instead it's like *The Breakfast Club* meets *Chronicle*.



**JOSH** The action is slick, Elizabeth Banks looks suitably camp/cool as Rita, and who doesn't love a band of losers becoming heroes? This could be mighty fun.



**RICH** This definitely doesn't feel like the kitschy *Power Rangers* I remember - and I'm not sure whether that's a good thing or not. It mostly feels like any other angst-y superhero movie...



**SCI-FACT!** Freddie Stroma is best known for playing Cormac McLaggen in the final three *Harry Potter* films.



## AFTERLIFE CELEBRATING ICONIC SCI-FI STARS

122

### CAROLINE BLAKISTON

*In time for Rogue One, it's Mon Mothma from Return Of The Jedi*



Despite a fleeting two minutes' screen time, New Republic Chancellor Mon Mothma made an indelible impression in *Return Of The Jedi*, memorably closing her pre-Battle of Endor briefing by mournfully uttering the immortal line: "Many Bothans died to bring us this information." A youthful incarnation of the character will return for *Rogue One* (played by Genevieve O'Reilly) but it was Caroline Blakiston who first brought the character to life 33 years ago. We spoke to the British actress about her most enduring role.

**Would you like to play Mon Mothma again?**

→ Of course. I'm part of Mon Mothma and Mon Mothma is part of me.

**What's the strangest request you've had from a fan?**

→ To sign photos of the other actress [Genevieve O'Reilly].

**Would any of your character's skills or attributes have been useful in real life?**

→ All of them. She was wonderfully eloquent, dignified, cool and collected. I interpreted her name as "Moon Mother" so being maternal was a key attribute too.

**What would Mon be doing now?**

→ Hopefully not retired but answering questions and helping strategise the defeat of the First Order!

**Is there anything you think was unfinished about the character's story?**

→ We're both still alive so plenty of scope for the character yet!

**What would it say on the character's gravestone?**

→ "May the force be with you!"

GETTY (3)



TV EXCLUSIVE

## TIME LORDS

Kevin Williamson plumbs HG Wells's history for trippy TV series *Time After Time*



**An often overlooked gem of late**

'70s sci-fi cinema is Nicholas Meyer's adaptation of *Time After Time*, Karl Alexander's novel, which had HG Wells using his time machine to travel to then-modern day San Francisco to capture an escaped Jack the Ripper. Luckily Kevin Williamson, one of TV's most successful executive producers (*Scream*, *The Vampire Diaries*) never forgot that movie...

"When I saw Nicholas Meyer's movie, it had a meta sensibility which became my sensibility," Williamson tells *Red Alert*. "[The film] was in Warner Bros's library so I toyed with turning it into a remake. Then I thought with a TV series, you could go further. *Time After Time* really only dealt with [the book] *The Time Machine*, and just one aspect of that novel. But what happened with *Doctor Moreau*, or *War Of The Worlds* that HG Wells was going to write? I thought, what a great stepping off point, to take Jack the Ripper, who is lost in modern New York City with Wells on his tail,

and we can build the mythology from there. We can have a mash-up of Wells's greatest hits."

Thus the series will start with the basic premise of the film but dive into new areas of Wells's life, writings, encounters and inspirations for his other books. "What I love about HG Wells is that he was trying to show the good and bad in humanity as it related to science and technology, and that's very timely," Williamson says. "The show is watching Wells (Freddie Stroma) stumble through a modern-day world trying to find Jack the Ripper (Josh Bowman), who aligns himself with some evil people who know about the time machine. And HG finds one human – Jane Walker (Genesis Rodriguez) – who shows him kindness and he latches onto her. At its core, it's a love story. There's a lot of high stakes, danger, jeopardy, and a little death here and there, but that's not the focus or what we're meant to be." ●

*Time After Time* will air on ABC in the US.



# A CHERRY GOOD EVENING OUT

**Twin Peaks** co-creator Mark Frost hosts an evening of weirdness...

➔ **Back in 1990, Mark Frost** was responsible for co-creating one of TV's weirdest and most wonderful programmes. Along with David Lynch, his *Twin Peaks* not only redefined the episodic format of television, but earned a cult following so ardent, it's no surprise the show's making a comeback in 2017, over two decades after it was unceremoniously cancelled by a network that didn't understand what it had.

Now, just ahead of the show's long-awaited third season – coming to Sky Atlantic in 2017 – Frost has written a new book, *The Secret History Of Twin Peaks*. He's taking it on tour, and on the Bath leg he'll be interviewed by *SFX*, at a special event with Topping & Company Booksellers in the city's Christ Church: Mark Frost Unveils The Secret History Of *Twin Peaks*.

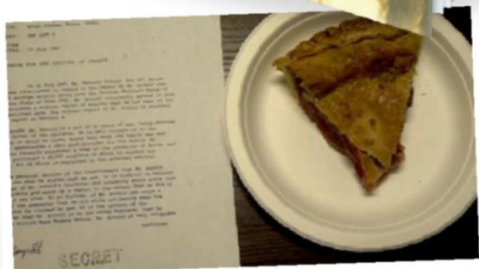
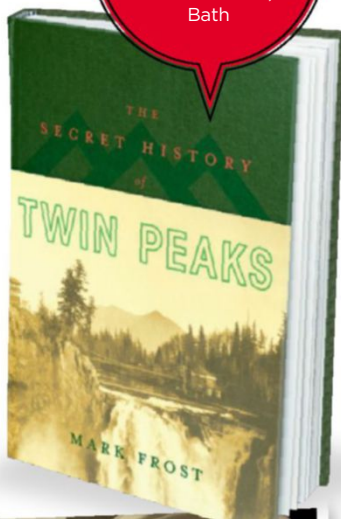
Telling "the story millions of fans have been waiting to read for 25 long years", Frost's book reintroduces us to the likes of FBI Agent Dale Cooper (Kyle MacLachlan) and the townspeople of the titular location, and it looks like the perfect primer for the show's return next year. Expect loads of background on the book from Frost, who'll no doubt be keeping schtum about the secrets of season three, but should have loads of insight into the cult phenomenon.

If you nab an Early Bird ticket, you'll get £10 off your own copy of *The Secret History Of Twin Peaks*, or buy a Book With Voucher ticket (for £19.99) to redeem a copy of the book along with a ticket to the event. Maybe it's time to start stockpiling cherry pie and steaming cups of Joe to get you in the right frame of mind... ●

Visit [www.toppingbooks.co.uk/events](http://www.toppingbooks.co.uk/events).

**DATE**  
18 November

**LOCATION**  
Christ Church,  
Bath



**DATE**  
12 November

**LOCATION**  
Phoenix Square,  
Leicester

## ROT RIOT

Fancy a day of **living undead** entertainment?



➔ **Zombies are** everywhere these days, and our appetite for the slaving undead isn't anywhere near sated, which makes the arrival of the 10th UK Festival of Zombie Culture perfect for those of us after some blood and guts before Christmas. There'll be screenings of more than 13 hours of zombie films – from modern offerings like *Train To Busan*, to tongue-in-mangled-cheek horrories like *Attack Of The Lederhosen Zombies*.

As if movies weren't enough, there'll also be a load of zombie-themed activities. The Arcade Of The Dead will host a series of retro zombie games, while make-up artists will be on hand to transform you and your friends into a hideous undead horde. Authors of your favourite zombie books will be attending, and horror traders will be around to help you with your Christmas shopping. And if you come dressed to impress, you could be in with the chance of winning the Best Dressed Zombie Award. Woo! ●

[www.terror4fun.com](http://www.terror4fun.com)

**COMING UP**

### NOVACON 46

**11-13 November**  
Nottingham's convention returns, with a focus on genre literature. Juliet McKenna is this year's guest of honour.  
[www.novacon.org.uk/n46](http://www.novacon.org.uk/n46)

### WHITBY SCI-FI & COMIC CON

**19 November**  
Signers and photo opps with your favourite sci-fi personalities at the Whitby Pavilion.  
[www.whitbyscifiandcomiccon.com](http://www.whitbyscifiandcomiccon.com)

### INVICTACON

**4 February 2017**  
A brand new convention for sci-fi and fantasy fans in Chatham.  
[www.invictacon.co.uk](http://www.invictacon.co.uk)

### 40 YEARS OF THRILL-POWER

**11 February**  
Celebrate four decades of 2000 AD with the likes of Pat Mills, John Wagner and Dave Gibbons at this day event at the Novotel London West.  
<http://events.2000adonline.com>

### CAPITAL SCI-FI CON

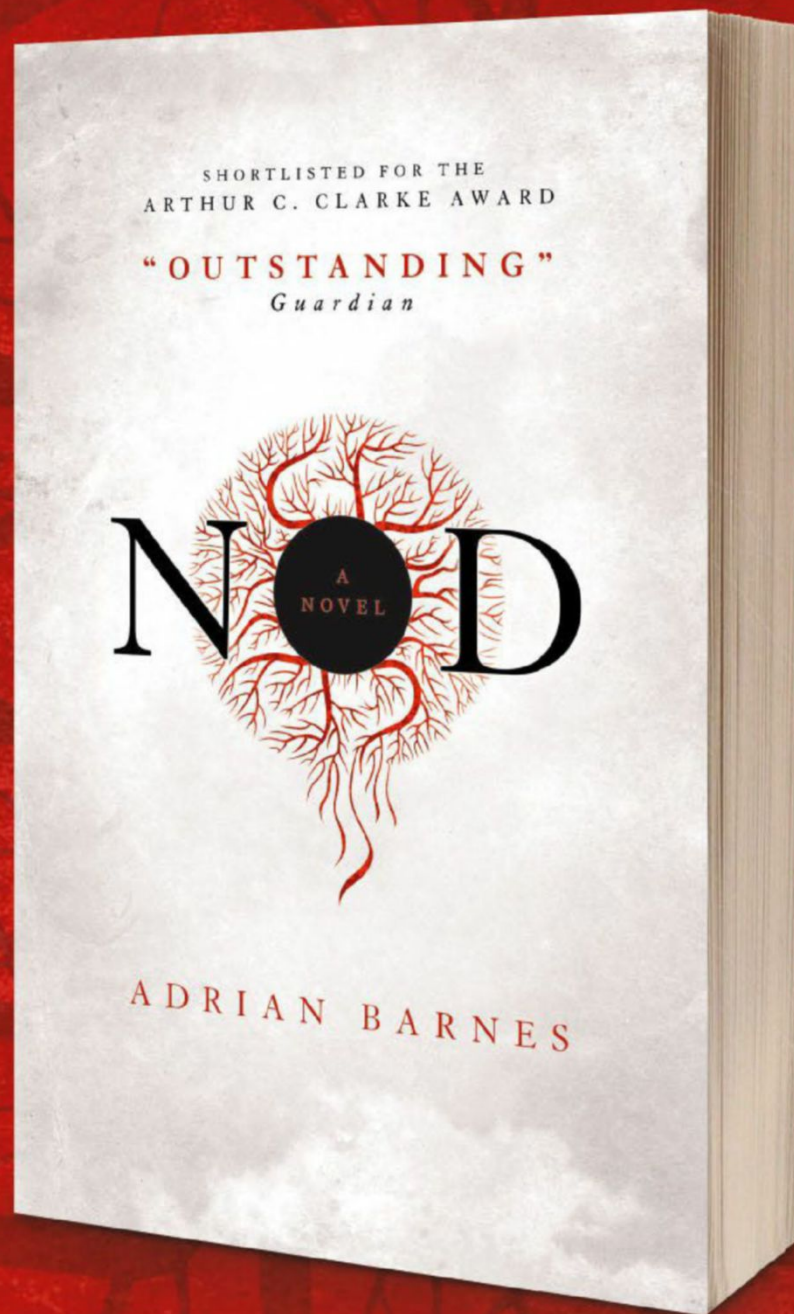
**18-19 February**  
The premier genre convention for Edinburgh dwellers, returning for its second year of all-out geekery, with talks, cars, props and more.  
[www.capitalscificon.co.uk](http://www.capitalscificon.co.uk)

Always a checked shirt!





GUARANTEED TO KEEP  
YOU UP AT NIGHT.



‘A clever, thoughtful and thought-provoking  
novel... Undoubtedly powerful.’ - SFX

Buy it at your local Waterstones or [Waterstones.com](http://Waterstones.com)  
**Waterstones • TITANBOOKS.COM**



## SCI-FACT!

Dan Dare's previous audio adventures include a Radio Luxembourg series and a Radio 4 adaptation.



WRITER EXCLUSIVE

The World's Number One Space Hero!

## TREEN AGE KICKS

Britain's greatest space hero, **Dan Dare**, soars again in a new series of audio adventures

➔ **Dan Dare is set for a relaunch this December**, and things have changed a bit for the Pilot of the Future. "Hollywood has reset the bar when it comes to dialogue and plotting," says Richard Kurti who – along with writing partner Bev Doyle – is part of a team helming a new series of audio adventures adapting Dare's original run from the 1950s: *Voyage To Venus*, *The Red Moon Mystery* and *Marooned On Mercury*. Adds Kurti: "What worked 50 years ago risks no longer keeping an audience engaged today. That meant adding more layers and twists to the plotting, and being much quicker and less old-fashioned with dialogue."

Kurti and Doyle's new range of full-cast audio adventures (produced by B7 Media and released by Big Finish) return *Eagle* comic's pilot to active duty in Space Fleet. And while directly inspired by Frank Hampson's original artwork, they've also modernised elements of the stories. "We tried to make the audio soundscape really rich and fascinating, using many layers of great FX and music," Kurti reveals.

The series' cast includes Geoffrey McGivern – Ford Prefect in the original radio version of *The Hitch Hiker's Guide To The Galaxy* – as Dare's loyal sidekick Digby, while Poldark's Heida Reed is Professor Jocelyn Peabody and Raad Rawi (*The Devil's Double*) brings arch nemesis the Mekon, leader of the Treens, to scheming, dome-headed life. As for Dare himself, he's voiced by Ed Stoppard (*The Pianist*). "Watching Ed in the studio was great," Kurti

says. "He completely understood the role and seemed to effortlessly embody the spirit of Dan."

So just how do you preserve the authentic '50s spirit of Dan Dare without it descending into a jolly old spoof? "I think the key to this is that the characters always take the situations they're in seriously," says Kurti. "The jeopardy is real, their lives are in genuine peril. The second an actor starts to think 'This is a Dan Dare adventure,' the whole thing collapses into pastiche. Andrew Sewell, the director, was brilliant at keeping everyone in the right zone."

And with a second volume set to follow in 2017 – *Reign Of The Robots*, *Operation Saturn* and *Prisoners Of Space* – there's definitely scope for original adventures down the line. "There are hundreds more stories to tell," says Kurti. "And we'd love to get our hands on the controls again!" ●

*Dan Dare Vol 1 is released in December.*

“DON'T QUOTE ME”

“I THINK THE TWO CHARACTERS COMPLEMENT EACH OTHER. I DON'T HAVE A LOT OF EXPERIENCE TRAVELLING THROUGH SPACE AND TIME, YOU SEE.”

Pearl Mackie has a few thoughts on *Doctor Who*.



## AERIAL ASSAULT

### SCI-FI TV ROUND UP

➔ **Iron Fist's** first season will stream on Netflix from 17 March 2017.

➔ **Stranger Things** season two has two new cast members in Dacre Montgomery (*Power Rangers*) and Sadie Sink (*Odyssey*).

➔ Jonathan Nolan and George RR Martin have jokingly discussed a **Westworld/ Game Of Thrones** crossover. "We should be so lucky," Nolan says. ➔ Chrysta Bell on the new **Twin Peaks**: "Prepare to be a little out of your comfort zone in the best possible way."

➔ Jamie Mathieson will return as a writer on series 10 of **Doctor Who**.

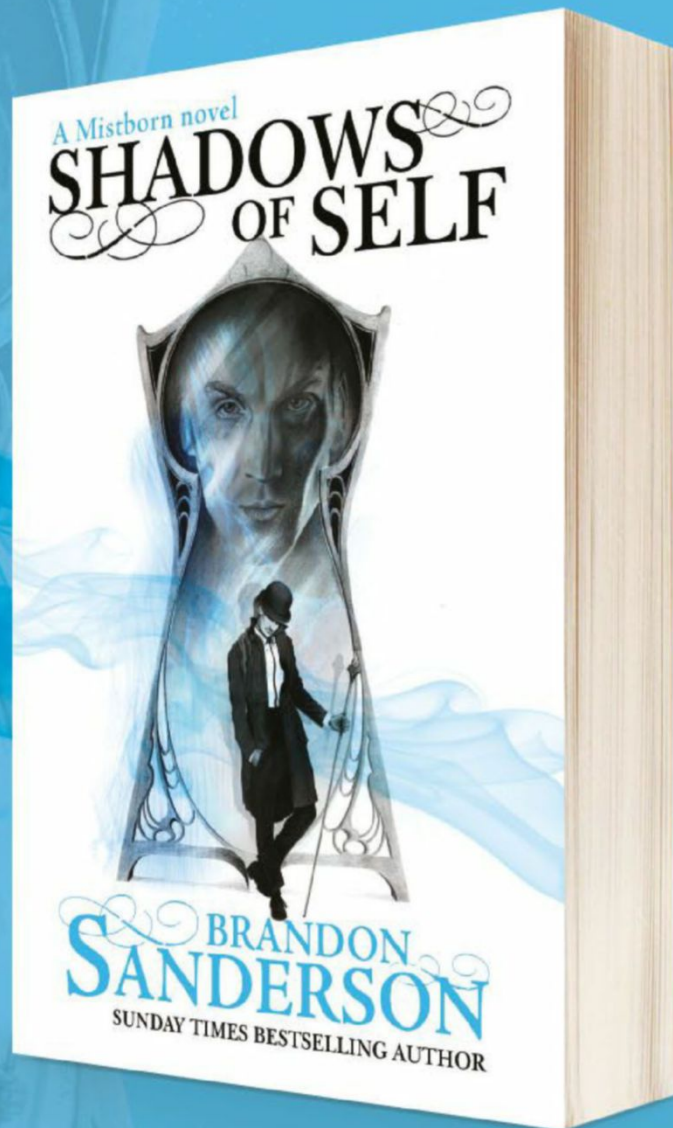
➔ "I don't know what the future holds," says *Supergirl* producer Andrew Kreisberg of a **Superman** spin-off starring Tyler Hoechlin.

➔ Studio Ghibli's **Ronja The Robber's Daughter** series will stream on Amazon Prime.

➔ **Eternal Sunshine Of The Spotless Mind** is being developed as a TV series.



# Fall under the spell of the MISTBORN series



Out now in paperback, ebook and audio download

Discover the internationally bestselling series





Red Alert Jan 2017

# Image Bank

Where pictures are greater than words

**SCI-FACT!** Hugh Jackman and Patrick Stewart have both hinted *Logan* will be their last ever X-flick.

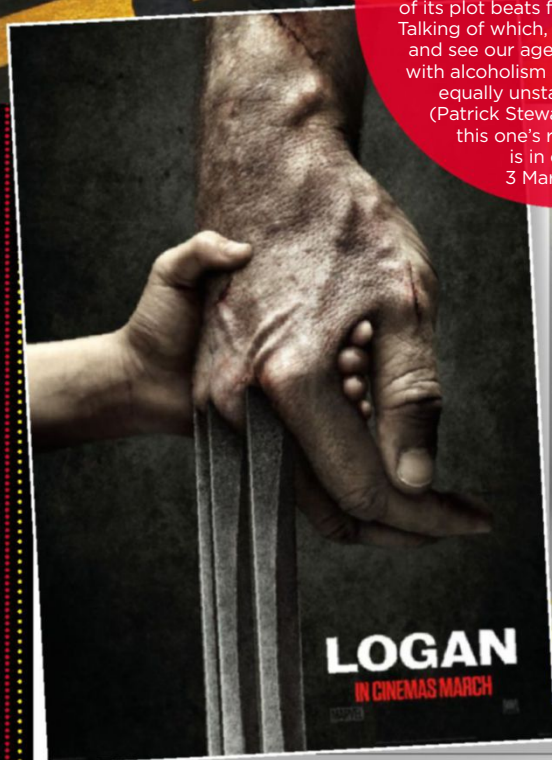


## LOGAN'S RUN

☛ Things are heating up over at Camp Wolverine this month, with a flurry of new information about Wolvie's third film. First up, this poster revealed the film will be called *Logan*, which seems fitting for a threequel that seems to take much of its plot beats from *Old Man Logan*. Talking of which, *Logan* is set in 2024 and see our ageing hero struggling with alcoholism and cared for by an equally unstable Professor X (Patrick Stewart). Even better: this one's rated R. *Logan* is in cinemas 3 March 2017.

## DEFEND THIS

☛ It's been three years since Netflix first unveiled its answer to the MCU with a quartet of Marvel shows that will culminate with miniseries *The Defenders*. This month, we've finally been given our first look at the four titular heroes - Daredevil, Luke Cage, Jessica Jones and Iron Fist - together. They united at New York Comic-Con, where they were joined by Sigourney Weaver, who'll play the series' villain. We're getting heart palpitations just thinking about it.



## BAT'S ENTERTAINMENT

☛ Looking for a little something different to brighten up your room? Well, look no further than Dark Hall Mansion's series of *Batman '66* prints, which are officially licensed by DC - and with a striking set that includes Batman, Robin, Catwoman, the Joker and Penguin, we can see why. The spray Batman one is our favourite, though; a seriously badass print by Kode Abdo aka BossLogic. Visit [darkhallmansion.com](http://darkhallmansion.com) for more.



**SCI-FACT!** Some gruesome scenes in *Salem* required a real rat to be put in Seth Gabel's mouth.

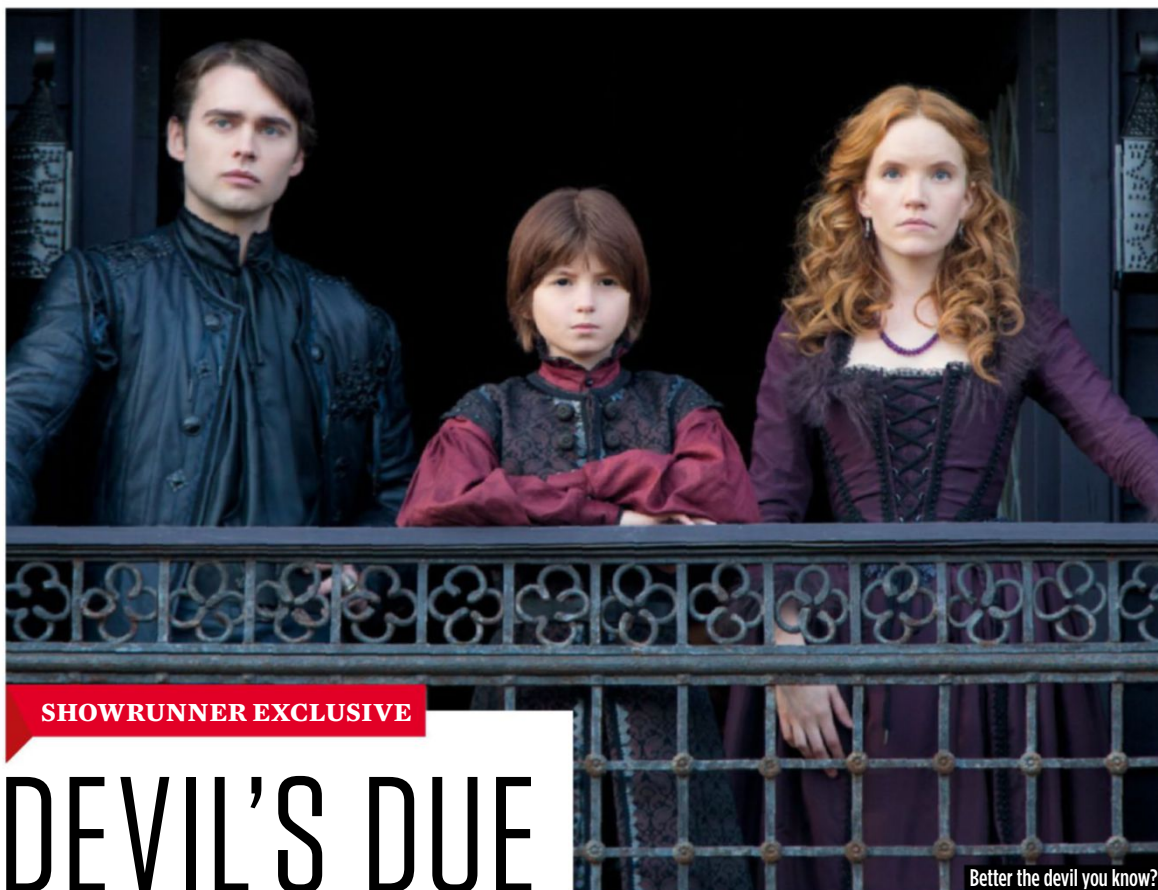


## NEWS WARP HIGH-SPEED FACTS

→ Mary Elizabeth Winstead, Ruby Rose and Mackenzie Davis are all up for roles in *Deadpool 2*. Director Tim Miller has exited the film though.  
→ *Doctor Who* and *Mr Men* are getting a book mash-up, with four new volumes out next spring.  
→ Gollancz is set to release a never-before-seen David Gemmell novel, *Rhyming Rings*.  
→ *Barbarella* is returning to comics in 2017 with a new series from Dynamite Entertainment.  
→ "I saw the trailer for



*Rogue One* a while ago and I was like, 'I want to do that,'" says Joss Whedon. Give this man a lightsaber now!  
→ Donald Glover has been confirmed to play Lando Calrissian in the untitled 2018 *Han Solo Star Wars Story*.  
→ JRR Tolkien's *Beren and Lúthien* is being published in 2017, 100 years after he wrote it.  
→ AMC has launched horror streaming service *Shudder* over at [www.shudder.com](http://www.shudder.com).



SHOWRUNNER EXCLUSIVE

## DEVIL'S DUE

Better the devil you know?

*Salem* co-creator Brannon Braga on Satan, Marilyn Manson and raising the dead in season three...



**"I'm back. Fuck all of you." That's what the devil** is thinking at the start of the third season of historical horror series *Salem*, according to co-creator Brannon Braga. After being awakened by Salem's witches at the end of season two, Lucifer intends to take revenge on God by destroying humanity. Yet, it's not just Puritans who will suffer, Braga tells Red Alert. "Season three will have the witches starting to question what they've done. He lied to them and he's not promising what he promised before. We're taking on a somewhat Miltonian theme."

With Satan set to be a major character in *Salem*'s third season, it could be a breakout year for the 12-year-old actor who plays him, Oliver Bell. "We weren't exactly sure how big a role his character would have until we saw Oliver's dailies coming in from the first couple of episodes of season

two and we were like, 'We're really lucky. We can basically do whatever we want to because Oliver can deliver.'"

Braga tells a similar story about Marilyn Manson, who joins *Salem*'s cast in season three as a barber-surgeon named Thomas Dinley. Braga describes Dinley as having "a whiff" of Sweeney Todd and Jeffrey Dahmer, and says the character got a prominent role this season because Manson is such a good fit. "It was just like Marilyn was part of the show from the beginning," Braga recalls. "He walked into Dinley's shop and looked around at all of the bizarre instruments of torture and things floating in jars and he said, 'Oh, this is what my house looks like.'"

The big question mark this season is over the fate of Mary Sibley (Janet Montgomery), mother of the boy whose body the devil has taken over. She was also Salem's most powerful witch before sacrificing herself at the end of season two. It's no spoiler to say she returns but she will have changed, Braga teases. "When she comes back she's deranged and she's furious... Very early in the season there are some shocking developments that I definitely don't want to give away but Mary's tale has only just begun." ●

*Salem* is now airing on WGN America and will be released on iTunes in the UK.



**“DON'T QUOTE ME”**

**“THE CREATIVE MODEL FOR THE FILM AND THE MARKETING MODEL MESHED WELL TOGETHER. WE WERE ALWAYS, ALWAYS TRYING TO MAKE ONE DOLLAR LOOK LIKE 10.”**

Ryan Reynolds on making *Deadpool* for, well, not very much.

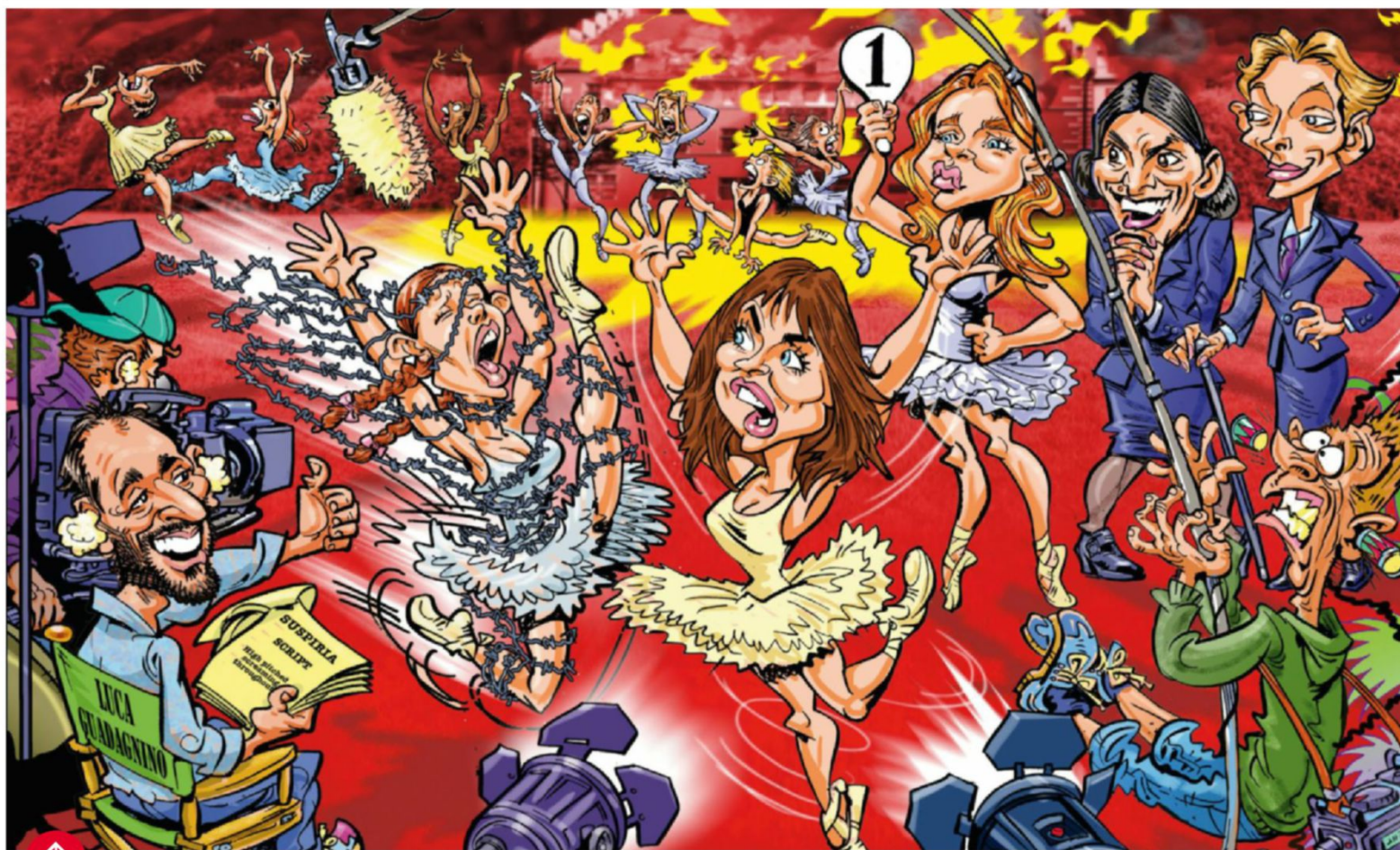




Nick Setchfield's

## DEVELOPMENT HELL

Your monthly glimpse into Hollywood's hoped-for future



### THE REDDER SHOES

#### SUSPIRIA

❖ **Chloë Grace Moretz** is enrolling in the remake of Dario Argento's acclaimed 1977 giallo (that's a bit like gelato, but with more slashy murder stuff and less choice of flavours). The original movie was a slice of atmospheric arthouse horror, telling of a young American ballet dancer who travels to a European dance academy, only to

discover a sinister, witchy secret at the heart of the school... *A Bigger Splash*'s **Luca Guadagnino** is set to direct the remake, reuniting with that film's stars **Dakota Johnson** – as the ballerina – and **Tilda Swinton** alongside **Mia Goth** from *Nymphomaniac Vol 2*. There's also a role for **Jessica Harper**, who played Johnson's part in the original. Guadagnino says the redo will explore “the

concept of motherhood and... the uncompromising force of motherhood” while preserving the late '70s setting. Production begins this October in Italy and Hungary.

#### TITLE FIGHT!

##### THE BATMAN

❖ It may be the definite article but it seems *The Batman* isn't the definite title of **Ben Affleck's**

Bat-flick. “Someone said ‘What are you calling it?’ and... I was like ‘We don't have a name for it, we're just going with *The Batman* or *Batman Movie*,’” the star tells *E! Online*. “I said that and everyone was like, ‘Affleck announces the name of his *Batman* movie.’” So *Batman: Gigli Reborn* remains a very real possibility. **Joe Manganiello** – cast as arch villain Deathstroke – claims that filming begins next



spring, making it a strong candidate for the 5 October 2018 slot Warner Bros have pinned for an unnamed movie. Affleck's looking forward to going Batarang-to-blade with the self-styled Terminator. "He's a great villain," he tells *Collider*. "I just had an instinctive feeling that he would match up with him well. I'm a big admirer of that character, especially in the New 52."

## SCARLETT AND BLACK!

### BLACK WIDOW

❖ No, there's still no official greenlight for a Black Widow solo film (though Marvel monarch **Kevin Feige** insists the studio is committed – "creatively and emotionally" – to making it happen, which is more than he's ever said about a Shanna the She-Devil movie). **Scarlett Johansson** is, however, ready and willing and doubtlessly priming herself for a barrage of blatant butt-shots: "I talked to them about it often," she tells *Variety*. "She's got a really rich origins story. There's a lot of places you can go – you can bring it back to Russia. You could explore the Widow program... you could really uncover the identity of who this person is." Will it happen? "I think if the fans wanted it enough, then it would probably become a reality." This is the point at which you all clap your hands and say "I believe in super-assassins."

## CRY KREEDOM!

### CAPTAIN MARVEL

❖ Marvel's still hunting a female helmer to bring superheroine Carol Danvers to the screen. "It will not be a requirement to make a great version of Captain Marvel, but it's something we think is important," **Kevin Feige** tells *IGN*. And it sounds like the Kree-empowered cosmic warrior will seriously shake up the power balance of the MCU. "She will be by far the most powerful character we've ever introduced," says Feige. "How do you find those limitations? How do you find those vulnerabilities?" is something that is at the crux of the story that we're putting together. She has –



## ALSO BURNING

→ **Emily Mortimer** joining *Mary Poppins Returns*... **Blade Runner** sequel officially *Blade Runner 2049*... *X-Men: Apocalypse*'s **Lana Connor** joining **Ed Skrein** in *Alita: Battle Angel*... **Boyd Holbrook** in talks to replace **Benicio del Toro** in *Predator* reboot... Sony bringing Valiant comics *Harbinger* and *Bloodshot* to the screen, followed by a *Harbinger Wars* crossover movie... **Justin Theroux** joining **Duncan Jones**' *Mute*... **Guy Ritchie** helming Disney's live action *Aladdin*... *Wonder Woman*'s **Jason Fuchs** writing the *Minecraft* movie for Warner... **JK Rowling** declaring there'll be no fewer than five *Fantastic Beasts* films... **Forest Whitaker** joining *Black Panther*... **Amy Adams** in talks for *Enchanted* sequel *Disenchanted*... **Karyn Kusama** directing horror tale *Breed*, based on the novel by **Chase Novak**... Universal teaming with Microsoft for another shot at a *Gears Of War* movie... Vampire comedy *Carmilla* coming to the big screen... **Leonardo DiCaprio** producing live action *Captain Planet*... *Godzilla*'s **Dave Callahan** writing *The Wolf Man* for Universal...



## “You could really uncover the identity of who Black Widow is”

as you know from the comics – an interesting story, and I think we have a very cool and unique way of telling that story. I don't think it's leaked yet exactly what we're doing with her movie or how we're doing it [relax, Kevin, Mr Assange had his broadband snipped just in time] but it will be cool. She will prove to be a very important character in our universe for all the movies."

**Brie Larson**'s a lock for the title role and the film is targeting a 2019 release.

## PANZA DIVISION!

### DON QUIXOTE

❖ It's beginning to feel like the universe itself is trolling **Terry Gilliam** now. While the Python's passion project *The Man Who Killed Don Quixote* remains on the merciless roasting rack of Development Hell, two decades after it was first announced – "I will be dead before the film is," Gilliam quips – it's just been announced that Disney is pursuing its own Quixote film. Based on Miguel de Cervantes' classic 1605 tale of a mad Spanish nobleman obsessed with medieval chivalry, it's set to be brought to the screen by **Billy Ray**, screenwriter of *Captain Phillips*, *The Hunger Games* and the movie version of *State Of Play*. Word is Disney's targeting a fantastical, *Pirates Of The Caribbean*-style take, threatening that those windmills our hero famously tilts at will be CGI dragons after all.

## FOSSIL FUEL!

### JURASSIC WORLD 2

❖ Objects in the rear view mirror may appear more pants-wetting

than they are... With horror movie specialist **JA Bayona** directing the *Jurassic World* sequel it's no surprise that the dino-franchise is set to crank up the jolts. "It will be more suspenseful and scary," says executive producer/co-writer **Colin Trevorrow**, who relinquished helming duties to the man who brought us *The Orphanage*. "The whole thing was just built around his skill set." While Trevorrow shoots down the rumour that the next entry will bring us weaponised prehistoric beasts – "I'm not that interested in militarised dinosaurs, at least not in practice," he tells *Jurassic Outpost*. "I liked it in theory as the pipe dream of a lunatic..." – he reveals that the new movie will go heavier on the animatronics than the pixel-heavy *Jurassic World*. "[Bayona] is all about going practical whenever possible."

## CAESAR THE DAY!

### PLANET OF THE APES 4

❖ We're still eight months away from the all-out ruck of *War For The Planet Of The Apes* – the third entry in Fox's reborn simian saga – but director **Matt Reeves** already knows where a fourth film is heading. And it may just edge us closer to the world Charlton Heston discovered way back in 1968... "Because we know that that's the ending, that it becomes *Planet Of The Apes*, the cool thing about what was started in *Rise* is that it's no longer about what happens," Reeves tells *Slashfilm*. "It's about how it happens. And stories about how are always about character and psychology... And you know the ending, but [you] also [know] that the world is not that world. So how did it change? Caesar's apes are not like the apes in *Planet Of The Apes*, right? They're very brutal to the humans. That's not what's going on, so how did that happen?" Reeves also reveals, "We think it's like a great Russian novel or something," which makes us ache to see Dr Zaius pondering the essential bleakness of the primate soul while gazing out over a wintry, post-apocalyptic Saint Petersburg. ●



Illustration by Paul Cemmick







# FINAL FANTASY XV



RECLAIM YOUR THRONE

— 29.11.16 —

PRE-ORDER NOW



SQUARE ENIX



XBOX ONE



PS4

FINAL FANTASY XV © 2016 SQUARE ENIX CO., LTD. All Rights Reserved. MAIN CHARACTER DESIGN: TETSUYA NOMURA. FINAL FANTASY, SQUARE ENIX and the SQUARE ENIX logo are registered trademarks or trademarks of Square Enix Holdings Co., Ltd. "X" is a registered trademark and "PS4" is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. All other trademarks are the properties of their respective owners. Subject to availability. Selected stores only

Available at  
**Sainsbury's**



//// SFX HAILING FREQUENCIES OPEN! ////

# First Contact



THIS MONTH'S COMMUNICATIONS MONITOR

IAN BERRIMAN,  
REVIEWS EDITOR



Something struck me this month: nowadays we seem to get more letters about lesser-known films and series than we do about the big-hitters. With the likes of *Luke Cage* or *Westworld*, it's as if people feel the arena of public debate is overcrowded! That's nice in a way, as it allows us to shine a light on some obscure corners. But we'd love to hear your views on more mainstream fare too, so if you've got something to say about the likes of *Doctor Strange*, *Class* and *Black Mirror*, get in touch! Contact points opposite.

## SFX Hot Topic *Your views on the month's big issue*

### #RED DWARF XI

- 🔗 **Rob Perry, Facebook** Episode one felt clunky and more concerned with the sci-fi elements than character comedy, like a series seven episode. But after episode two things settled into a series three/four vibe and it had me roaring with laughter.
- 🔗 **Kirsty Leanne, Facebook** It's not quite at its height, but still very funny, and superior to the bad old days of series seven and eight.
- 🔗 **Seb Jowett, Facebook** More laughs per show than most sitcoms manage per series.
- 🔗 **Christopher Dowson, Facebook** It can never be what it was – a show about the last human trying not to go mad in deep space. It lacks the humanity and creativity. Now it's just another sci-fi comedy.
- 🔗 **SFX** *Er, just another sci-fi comedy? Which one are you thinking of? Hyperdrive? No Heroics?*
- 🔗 **Andrew Francis, Facebook** Recycling old plots and slipping them into new shows... come on, they can do lots better!
- 🔗 **Dave Simmonds, Facebook** It feels like some

ideas are recycled, but the Lister and Cat talk in "Samsara" was some of the best comedy *Red Dwarf*'s ever done.

- 🔗 **James Metherell, Facebook** It's *Red Dwarf* by numbers, but still tons of fun.
- 🔗 **Michael Reid, Facebook** The kidneys episode didn't work timeline-wise!
- 🔗 **Patrick McCafferty, email** If Lister from the morning's kidneys were removed before he went to the spacestation, how could the medibot remove them later on?!
- 🔗 **Crom Arty, Facebook** It's good, but I miss the days when the series was constantly reinventing itself. Even if it wasn't always 100% successful it was always doing the unexpected. I'd love to see one of the regulars leave, or a new character join. Or rethink the format – strand the crew on a planet for a season and see how they cope. Surprise the viewers!
- 🔗 **Gala Ametza, Facebook** What with the time-play, comic robots and the Lintilla device in episode four it feels like the writing's been inspired by *The Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy* – but that's a good thing!
- 🔗 **SFX** *Yep, the ideas quotient has undoubtedly*







## Get in touch!

@ Email [sfx@futurenet.com](mailto:sfx@futurenet.com) • Facebook [Facebook.com/SFXmagazine](https://www.facebook.com/SFXmagazine)

Twitter @SFXmagazine • Post SFX, Quay House, The Ambury, Bath, BA1 1UA

“The funniest it’s been for a while, if not as good as series III to VI”

been high this year. Hopefully Doug Naylor can sustain it into next year’s *Red Dwarf* XII.

Keith, email *Red Dwarf* is the funniest it’s been for a while – if not as good as its series three to six run. Maybe the addition of a writing partner would help the show be even better, though. A lot of the funniest shows worked well because the writers could bounce ideas back and forth – think Jimmy Perry and David Croft (*Dad’s Army*), Arthur Mathews and Graham Linehan (*Father Ted*) etc. *Red Dwarf* was at its most brilliant when Rob Grant and Doug Naylor worked on it together.

Marc Farmer, Facebook It’s nice to see a show where you can tell that the cast all really love doing it.

Mark Harrison, Facebook After the first two episodes I decided not to watch any more. It feels like a group of people doing impressions of younger versions of themselves.

Rick Taylor, Facebook I think it’s hilarious. Too bad holograms and androids visibly age!

Jonathan Harvey, Twitter Danny John-Jules must be a robot, as he hasn’t aged!

SFX Really sorry if you’re reading this, Chris and Robert! Maybe you could ask Danny where he buys his secret rejuvenation tonic?

Look out for the next SFX Hot Topic at [bit.ly/SFXhottopic](http://bit.ly/SFXhottopic)



Kubo And The Two Strings: film of the year?!

## #TV OR NOT TV?

James Kinsley, Norwich In *SFX* 279, three of my fellow *SFX*ers gave *Star Trek: Beyond* a thumbs-up on the grounds that it was like an extended episode of the original TV show. Time was when “just like an extra-long TV episode” was a strong criticism of a spin-off movie – at the cinema we expected something extra, something indefinably “more”. Were m’colleagues merely drawing the comparison to positively comment on the characters and themes? Or have our expectations for theatrical releases sunk so low that we’re now quite happy to pay upwards of a tenner to watch a 90-minute TV episode on the big screen? Or maybe it’s not about our expectations for cinema sinking, but our relative respect for TV rising?

SFX In this case I think people were responding to the fact that it leaves Earth behind. *Beyond* certainly has all the scale and spectacle you expect from a movie. A bit too much, frankly.

## #HOPE STRINGS ETERNAL

The Llama God, The Darkly Optimistic Lands North of the Wall It’s been a dark time of hate and suffering and death lately, and this year’s

blockbuster fare has been typically packed full of explosive action, but generally light on thoughtful content. There’s been no difference in a time when something different has been needed more than ever. All we’ve been provided with are stories repeating the only story that we want to hear, the story we repeat to ourselves as we rage against enemies and hardships that we neither understand nor recognise, but that we know *must* exist in order to provide our selves with meaning: we are the good guys and the good guys must win, because we are not the bad guys and the bad guys are bad.

But then, in the dying days of the summer, came *Kubo And The Two Strings*. This is a film where the hero defeats the bad guy not by utterly destroying him out of revenge, but by understanding what it is that the bad guy has also lost. And the reaction to that is one of generosity, and acceptance; evil is banished by an act of true kindness, not by explosive “heroics”, with the hero proving how strong or smart they are. The hero survives by using his compassion. In these times of enmity and spite, this is perhaps the message we need the most.

Would I go so far as to say that →



The show’s still shining a light for sci-fi on TV.





*Kubo And The Two Strings* is the film of the year? Since it was able to pluck at the remaining few, frayed strings of my heart, and show me something real, a glimpse of what actual hope could look like, I'd have to say yes.

**SFX** *It would have been better if at some point Kubo had dived through the air in slow-motion firing two Uzis though, right?*

## #A SHOW'S ENTIRE UK AUDIENCE WRITES (PART ONE)

🔗 **Russel Guppy, Twitter** *Is Aftermath supposed to be a parody, a comedy? I just can't tell. Watching it, I'm wondering if they were unsure how to end the world so ended up using all their ideas instead of just one!*

**SFX** *No Sharknados, though. Bit disappointing.*

## #A SHOW'S ENTIRE UK AUDIENCE WRITES (PART TWO)

🔗 **Mike Garner, email** The write-up for *The Good Place* made that show sound like a giant pile of carp [what, the fish? – Ian], but it turns out that shirt is forking brilliant [oh, okay, I've got the idea now, melon-farmer – Ian]. It's really, really well written. The writers obviously know how stupid it

sounds and just don't care – they have a very sound idea how to use the idea of the show.

**SFX** *It's a sitcom with Ted Danson in it – in the absence of more Cheers, we'll take it. Hang on, how are you watching this NBC show from Yorkshire, Mike?*

## #WAN MORE TIME

🔗 **Mark Howe, Facebook** I see Ewan McGregor is still keen on playing Obi-Wan again. Poor Ewan. He got a pretty rough deal from the prequels until about the last 40 minutes of *Revenge Of The Sith*. An Obi-Wan film could be interesting. Did he really stay on Tatooine all those years?

🔗 **Andrew Walker, Facebook** So... 19 years of Obi-Wan living in a crap house in a desert. Watching Twi'lek porn and living on microwave meals. Occasionally he goes out and has a look to check nobody has run off with Luke Skywalker. Then he cries himself to sleep holding an old lightsaber. Cannot wait for that one...

**SFX** *I probably shouldn't be identifying with that lifestyle description quite so much. Oh dear.*

## #WHO'S THE DADDY?

🔗 **Stuart Jones, Facebook** I think Rey is Luke's sister. It just came to me. They impregnated a woman with

“I think Rey is Luke Skywalker's sister. It just came to me”

Darth Vader's DNA. The woman got away and left the kid behind after one of those Imperial ships crashed on the planet. I mean, why wouldn't you? If you had Darth Vader, with all that power, and you knew it transfers to his kids, why wouldn't you artificially inseminate loads of women with his seed to produce a bloody army of Jedi? There could be loads of them out there!

🔗 **Lee Harrison, Facebook** I'll eat my replica Indiana Jones hat if that's right – I think she's a clone of either Luke or Anakin, or the progeny of Darth Sidious! She did grow up among wrecked Imperial ships – maybe she crashed onboard one of them! Either theory would fit. It's not something like Rey is Luke's daughter – it just can't be that boring...!

**SFX** *Just as long as no one mentions ruddy midi-chlorians, I'll be happy.*

## #WYRE PEOPLE: GRUDGEFUL

🔗 **Andrew Oakley, Facebook** I never understood why *Blair Witch* was supposed to be scary. It just seemed like an ordinary day out in the Wyre Forest where I grew up, near Kidderminster. Ditto *The Wicker Man* – other than the human sacrifice it seemed to be just a normal May Day in 1970s Shropshire. Then there's *The Shining*, in which a dopey, lazy, unemployed wife does everything she can to interrupt her hard-working husband who is trying to save the family finances, then she kidnaps his son in a pique of attention-seeking.

**SFX** *Well, that all went a bit Fathers4Justice at the end, didn't it? Yikes.*

## #BUNNY PECULIAR

🔗 **Medium Atomic Weight, email** Isn't the internet a great thing? You can find the answer to absolutely anything you want to know. Can you bollocks! It doesn't matter what combination of words I put into Google, I still can't find the name of a weird little horror film I watched in the late '80s, on a rented VHS. There was this little blonde girl who had a pet rabbit during the myxomatosis crisis in Australia. She was bullied by other kids, and some kind of monster used to appear. I thought it was really quite good at the time. I just need to find the bloody title!

**SFX** *Gosh, this takes me back. Remember the old days, long-time readers, before people mastered Google and sent our Ask The SFXperts column where obsolete mag features go to die? If this rings a bell, let us know and we'll put this chap out of his misery!*

## #SIGNING ON

🔗 **Gary Bowers, email** I recently attended a con called Stoke-Con-Trent. Attending were Chris Barrie, Danny John-Jules, Robert Llewellyn and Norman Lovett. I'd been searching for something different to get signed when *SFX* 279 turned up. Inside: a *Red Dwarf* celebration booklet, perfect to take along to the con. Robert Llewellyn loved it and held the queue up while he flicked through, laughing at the stats and photos. So thank



you for the perfect timing of this booklet – it definitely stood out from the usual “Can you sign my picture or DVD?”

**SFX** Glad to be of service! Though I'd be more tickled by this if it was less appropriate. Has anyone got an issue of *SFX* signed by, say, all of Wimbledon's 1988 FA Cup Final-winning team, or every Wu-Tang Clan affiliate (including Shorty Shitstain)? Now I've planted that seed in your minds, let it grow into something beautiful...

## #WE ALSO HEARD FROM

🔊 **Tony Bufton, Twitter** Re: the *Westworld* TV series, the big question for me is, do Medievalworld and Romanworld exist in this version too?  
**SFX** Aaaaand *HBO* just commissioned two spin-off shows, giving us even more work to do. Thanks a lot, Tony.

🔊 **@passionsdaysfan, Twitter** I found *Luke Cage* boring. They tried too hard to make it “gritty” and “realistic” instead of embracing over-the-top superheroics.  
**SFX** You still have your *Lynda Carter Wonder Woman* box sets. Cling to that consolation.

🔊 **Erica Kovacs, email** When are you going to put Negan from *The Walking Dead* on the cover of your magazine? Negan poster please!  
**SFX** Sorry Erica, no plans – when trying to sell a mag it's good policy to stick one of the regular hero characters on the front!

🔊 **Geraint Wyn Williams, email** Would you know, is *The Man In The High Castle* coming out on DVD? Or can someone come around to our house and explain to me and the wife what Netflix is?

**SFX** Firstly, it will someday – but judging by *Daredevil*, not for absolutely ages. Secondly, I'm frightened this could be some sort of trap, so no.

🔊 **Daniel Goble, Facebook** Kylo Ren wears that helmet for hours on end. When he finally takes it off how come he doesn't have hat hair? It's the only part of *The Force Awakens* that bothered me.

**SFX** Space conditioner, Daniel. Special futuristic space conditioner that uses nanotechnology to maintain your style. Don't laugh, Pantene's scientists are probably working on it as we speak.



## Your sci-fi memorabilia valued by the experts from auctioneers Vectis

➔ Adam Bowley says: “As a kid I was a big fan of *Superman The Movie* but as it was the '70s the only merch I could find in the shops was the Topps bubblegum cards. I collected the complete set and even kept one of the wax wrappers for old times' sake (don't worry, I threw away the horrible sticks of gum, I'm not that sad!). Curious to know how much they're worth now.”



## KATHY TAYLOR OF VECTIS SAYS:

Christopher Reeve made his lead film debut in 1978 as *Superman* and the original Topps *Superman The Movie* trading cards are quite easily available today. The 165 cards were released in two parts: series one cards, 77 in total, are within a red box with a blue band along the bottom and series two, 88 cards, within a yellow box with green band. Each pack came with either a plain or foil sticker.

These sets and singles are relatively affordable and easy to find today – but their popularity and the fact that they were widely collected back in the day means that can be tough to source in mint condition. (You can come across unopened packs and boxes.)

If you've got a piece of memorabilia you'd like us to feature, send us a photo of your item with a few words about what it means to you, to [sfx@futurenet.com](mailto:sfx@futurenet.com), using the subject line Cash In The AT-AT.

# SFX

ISSUE 281 | JANUARY 2017

Future Publishing Ltd Quay House, The Ambury, Bath, BA1 1UA  
Email [sfx@futurenet.com](mailto:sfx@futurenet.com) Web [www.gamesradar.com/sfx](http://www.gamesradar.com/sfx)

## EDITORIAL

Editor Richard Edwards, [richard.edwards@futurenet.com](mailto:richard.edwards@futurenet.com)  
Art Editor Jonathan Coates, [jonathan.coates@futurenet.com](mailto:jonathan.coates@futurenet.com)  
Art Editor (Film Group) Cliff Newman, [cliff.newman@futurenet.com](mailto:cliff.newman@futurenet.com)  
Production Editor Russell Lewin, [russell.lewin@futurenet.com](mailto:russell.lewin@futurenet.com)  
Features Editor Nick Setchfield, [nick.setchfield@futurenet.com](mailto:nick.setchfield@futurenet.com)  
Reviews Editor Ian Berriman, [ian.berriman@futurenet.com](mailto:ian.berriman@futurenet.com)  
News Editor Josh Winning, [joshuawinning@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:joshuawinning@yahoo.co.uk)  
US Editor (East Coast) Tara Bennett, [usaeast@sfx.co.uk](mailto:usaeast@sfx.co.uk)  
US Editor (West Coast) Joseph McCabe, [usawest@sfx.co.uk](mailto:usawest@sfx.co.uk)

## CONTRIBUTORS

Sam Ashurst, Calvin Baxter, Louise Blain, Saxon Bullock, Bryan Cairns, Paul Cemmick, Abigail Chandler, Nick Chen, Nicola Clarke, Sarah Dobbs, Luke Dormehl, Penny Dreadful, Rhian Drinkwater, Rosie Fletcher, Paul Garner, Kieron Gillen, Dave Golder, Nicky Gotobed, Jamie Graham, Stephen Jewell, Stephen Kelly, Paul Kirkley, Matthew Looker, Miriam McDonald, Jayne Nelson, James Nouch, Andrew Osmond, Oliver Pfeiffer, Eddie Robson, Bridie Roman, Michael Simpson, Drew Turney, James White, Jonathan Wright

## FILM GROUP, LONDON

Editor-in-Chief Jane Crowther Art Editor Mike Brennan  
Reviews Editor Matthew Leyland Features Editor Matt Maytum  
News Editor Jordan Farley Operations Editor Andrew Westbrook  
Entertainment Editor (GamesRadar+) Lauren O'Callaghan

Cover photography © Lucasfilm Ltd/Disney

Photography Olly Curtis

## ADVERTISING

Commercial Sales Director Clare Dove, [clare.dove@futurenet.com](mailto:clare.dove@futurenet.com)  
Advertising Sales Manager Simon Rawle, [simon.rawle@futurenet.com](mailto:simon.rawle@futurenet.com)  
Director of Agency Sales Matt Downs, [matt.downs@futurenet.com](mailto:matt.downs@futurenet.com)  
Head of Strategic Partnerships Clare Jonik, [clare.jonik@futurenet.com](mailto:clare.jonik@futurenet.com)  
For advertising queries, please contact Steven Pyatt, 01225 687713

## MARKETING

Marketing Manager Kristianne Stanton, [kristianne.stanton@futurenet.com](mailto:kristianne.stanton@futurenet.com)  
Marketing Executive Emma Clapp, [emma.clapp@futurenet.com](mailto:emma.clapp@futurenet.com)

## PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION

Production Controller Frances Twentyman, [frances.twentyman@futurenet.com](mailto:frances.twentyman@futurenet.com)  
Head of Production UK & US Mark Constance, [mark.constance@futurenet.com](mailto:mark.constance@futurenet.com)  
Printed in the UK by William Gibbons & Sons on behalf of Future  
Distributed in the UK by Seymour Distribution Ltd,  
2 East Poultry Avenue, London EC1A 9PT Tel 020 7429 4000  
Overseas distribution by Seymour International

## CIRCULATION

Trade Marketing Manager Michelle Brock, 020 7429 3683,  
[michelle.brock@seymour.co.uk](mailto:michelle.brock@seymour.co.uk)

## LICENSING

International Director Matt Ellis, [matt.ellis@futurenet.com](mailto:matt.ellis@futurenet.com)  
Tel +44 (0)1225 442244

## THE SENIOR PARTNERS

Group Art Director Graham Dalzell  
Editorial Director Paul Newman  
Managing Director, Magazines Division Joe McEvoy

## SUBSCRIBE TO SFX

Phone our UK hotline on 0844 848 2852 International +44 (0)1604 251 045  
Online enquiries [www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk](http://www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk)  
Email [sfx@myfavouritemagazines.co.uk](mailto:sfx@myfavouritemagazines.co.uk)

## THIS ISSUE WAS BROUGHT TO YOU BY

Freezing Finnish lakes, day trips to Estonia, the Great South Run, Goat's Requiem LP; Vanishing Twin's *Choose Your Own Adventure LP*, *Sour Grapes*, street snakes, bunny discovery, Twerton fair, The Smyths, alphabetising the CD collection!



Future is an award-winning international media group and leading digital business. We reach more than 49 million international consumers a month and create world-class content and advertising solutions for passionate consumers online, on tablet & smartphone and in print.

Future plc is a public company quoted on the London Stock Exchange (symbol: FUTR).  
[www.futureplc.com](http://www.futureplc.com)

Director Krennic Zillah Byng-Thorne  
Non-executive chairman Peter Allen  
Chief financial officer Penny Larkin-Brand

Tel +44 (0)20 7042 4000 (London)  
Tel +44 (0)1225 442 244 (Bath)

All contents are blah blah – fooled you! That wasn't the official one! This is, though: All contents copyright © 2016 Future Publishing Limited or published under licence. All rights reserved. No part of this magazine may be reproduced, stored, transmitted or used in any way without the prior written permission of the publisher. Future Publishing Limited (company number 2008885) is registered in England and Wales. Registered office: Quay House, The Ambury, Bath, BA1 1UA. All information contained in this publication is for information only and is, as far as we are aware, correct at the time of going to press. Future cannot accept any responsibility for errors or inaccuracies in such information. You are advised to contact manufacturers and retailers directly with regard to the price and other details of products or services referred to in this publication. Apps and websites mentioned in this publication are not under our control. We are not responsible for their contents or any changes or updates to them. If you submit unsolicited material to us, you automatically grant Future a licence to publish your submission in whole or in part in all editions of the magazine, including licensed editions worldwide and in any physical or digital format throughout the world. Any material you submit is sent at your risk and, although every care is taken, neither Future nor its employees, agents or subcontractors shall be liable for loss or damage.



We are committed to only using magazine paper which is derived from well managed, certified forestry and chlorine-free manufacture. Future Publishing and its paper suppliers have been independently certified in accordance with the rules of the FSC (Forest Stewardship Council).



Print: 19,032  
Digital: 3,192

The ABC combined print, and digital circulation for Jan-Dec 2014 is **22,224**.  
A member of the Audited Bureau Of Circulations

“You're not the world”



## THE BATMAN

Into what dark corners of Gotham would you like to see Ben Affleck steering the Batmobile? *Illustration by Paul Garner*

### Wishlist

WHAT YOU WANT TO SEE IN UPCOMING MOVIES AND TV

#### YOUR TOP 5 REQUESTS

LOOK TO THE SKIES, WARNER BROS – SFX READERS HAVE SENT A BAT-SIGNAL BLAZING INTO THE CLOUDS. HERE'S WHAT THEY WANT FROM THE SOLO BAT-MOVIE

#### HAVE BATMAN DETECTING STUFF

**1** A lot of you seem to think the character's origins in *Detective Comics* have been forgotten! In the words of **Brian Stabler**, "A bit of detecting wouldn't go amiss. Batman is, after all, supposed to be the World's Greatest Detective!" @amberkrakn is singing from the same hymn sheet. "Have Batman solving a case involving just normal criminals."

#### OBSURE VILLAINS

**2** The news that this movie will feature assassin Deathstroke has gone down well. Lesser-known villains got more mentions than the likes of the Riddler and the Penguin. "Anarchy can always use more love (the real one, not the imitators since)," says **Alan Wilkinson**. There were also votes for Clayface, Mudpack, Mad Hatter, Music Meister and Baby Doll.

#### BRING IN ROBIN

**3** **Sean Bonau** was among those keen on seeing the Boy Wonder – and not just so

we can see the character meet a gruesome end, we think! **Matt Christian** supplies a twist on the theme: "Nightwing! Or at the very least a Dick Grayson cameo." A few of you also proposed gender-swapping the character.

#### NO JARED LETO

**4** When you weren't ranting about recasting Batman, preferably by bringing back Christian Bale, you were slating *Suicide Squad's* take on the Clown Prince of Crime. "The actual Joker, not the pimp clown," **Oliver Fitzsimmons** complains. "We seriously need Jared Leto to be revealed as a former Robin..."

#### BIN THE BACKSTORY

**5** If there's one thing nobody wants, it seems, it's to see Bruce Wayne's parents gunned down in an alley with pearls cascading onto the sidewalk again – or any other elements of the Dark Knight's rise. "No origin story!" is the cry from the likes of **Jason Burke** and **Ryan Weavell**, clearly keen to see Batman just getting the hell on with it.

#### And that's not all they want...

→ **Medium Atomic Weight** Noel Edmonds should turn up as Cluemaster. He'll be needing a new gig when *Deal Or No Deal* ends.  
→ **crazymurday** I'd like for it to be scripted by Paul Dini.  
→ **Jim Fitton** Make him a hero – look at Zorro, the Scarlet Pimpernel and Robin Hood instead of cherry-picking the comics for ideas.  
→ **Dom Archer** I want to see Batman truly believing in himself and his cause. Allies doubt, villains challenge, Batman prevails!  
→ **Adelaide Robinson** More respect for Batman's history and supporting cast (Robins and Batgirls!) – and Ryan Potter as Tim Drake please!

→ **Ross Harrison** I'd like for Batman to be more than a common psychopath!  
→ **testiculan** Even more bone-crushing Batfleck, and more LSD-infused visions – more drugs and violence in general!  
→ **Keith Heeney** Bat Nipples – something for the Mad Hatter to hang his hats on! Oh and shark-repellent Bat-spray, gotta have some of that! But no bombs with the word "BOMB" on them. That would just be silly.  
→ **Gareth Maddieson** A live-action remake of *Mask Of The Phantasm*!  
→ **Marc Farmer** A fleshed-out villain. If DC can accomplish that then they'll have at least done something better than Marvel.

→ **Steve Hyett** A shorter running time. One hour 45 minutes is fine!  
→ **Jonathan Webb** He should lose the Bat-costume and have a futuristic ninja look.  
→ **Damian Conibere** I'd like to see a Red Hood story taken out of *Arkham Knight*.  
→ **John Finnan** The sort of paranoid over-planning that lets him stay one step ahead of even the most powerful adversaries.  
→ **Wayne Smyth** A grey suit – and no *Suicide Squad* members.  
→ **Brett Connolly** Mr Freeze, played by Peter Weller.  
→ **Lee Harrison** I'd be impressed if they got a Stan Lee cameo!  
→ **David Whittam** Basically, put some effing jokes in it.

#### MILLIE BOBBY BROWN

Robin

#### COMING SOON BOND 25 AND GAME OF THRONES SERIES 7

Next up it's the return of 007, and after that it's the seventh season for the Seven Kingdoms. Get thinking!

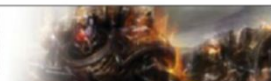
See bit.ly/newSFXwishlist for details.



In association with

TALES OF WAR FROM THE GRIM  
DARKNESS OF THE FAR FUTURE

blacklibrary.com



# First Contact Jan 2017

## YOUR DREAM CAST



**STEPHEN MERCHANT**

Riddler

**JOE MANGANIELLO**

Deathstroke

**BEN AFFLECK**

Batman

**ELIJAH WOOD**

Penguin





# Penny Dreadful

SFX's high priestess of horror

## BLAST FROM THE PAST

❖ So **Ouija 2** is okay. Or rather, should we say, *Ouija -1*, given this is a prequel set in the '60s about a mother and two girls who hold fake séances in the name of bringing "comfort" to the bereaved. But when they pick up Hasbro's game, "Ouija", things get a bit ghostly.

Retro settings for horror films seem to be all the rage. You don't need to worry about mobile phones, CCTV cameras or any modern technology. But actually it's more than that. We live in an age of cynicism. Of social media, "meh" and "LOLs", where everyone has seen everything before, and no one is scared by anything that isn't a loud noise and a crash zoom. Taking us back to a time when we were more isolated, when power cuts and candles were a thing, when houses were creaky and we could believe in ghosts, is strangely comforting. *Ouija 2* isn't great. But it did make me miss a simpler time when all we had to be afraid of was our youngest daughter being possessed by the malevolent spirit of tortured WW2 victims and not all this Trump and Brexit stuff.

## GUESS WHO'S COMING TO DINNER

❖ Trailer of the month goes to **Get Out**, another from the Blumhouse horror factory. Daniel Kaluuya stars as an African-American guy who heads to the country to meet the parents of his Caucasian girlfriend, but once he's there he's confronted with a barrage of bizarre and terrifying racist behaviour. There's some crazy supernatural stuff going on here as well, and some alarming mind games from Catherine Keener's hypnotist mother. It's directed by Jordan Peele of comedy duo Key and Peele, so I'm expecting wry laughs as well as social commentary and freaky horror.

## SHORT SHOCKS

❖ Two Pixar animators have released a short – and it's a little bit harrowing. This is **Borrowed Time**, a seven-minute vignette about an ageing sheriff returning to the scene of a horrible accident that's been plaguing him since he was a young man. It's a Western – think *No Country For Old Men* meets *Toy Story 3*. Filmmakers Lou Hamou-Lhadj and Andrew Coats said they

Something old,  
something new,  
something Blumhouse,  
something to do



Spooky houses and kids in *Ouija: Origin of Evil*.



Dark animation *Borrowed Time*.



Connie could have Miss Piggy any day.

wanted to make an animation that's not for kids and that they want people to see animation not as a genre in itself but just another method of storytelling. The next step, then, is surely horror. Okay, there's a fair bit of horror anime from Japan, while stopmotion movies like *The Nightmare Before Christmas* and *Corpse Bride* touch on horror themes, but outside of that it's sparse. Are we missing a trick? Pixar's so damn good these days their films are completely immersive – with zero restrictions, they could surely scare the life out of us. Make it so, guys.

## HEAR, HEAR

❖ More on shorts then – and two new ones doing the festival circuit that I urge you to watch. The first is **Connie**, from director Cat Davies, a kind of funny, feminist riff on the ventriloquist section of *Dead of Night*, where a struggling comedienne adopts gobby puppet Connie to freshen her act – but at what cost? The second is **Dawn Of The Deaf**, which just won the prize for Best Short at Sitges. It deals with big issues like the impending zombie apocalypse and it looks astounding, with 28 *Days Later* levels of scale. *Dawn Of The Deaf* was shot in London with the deaf community and is a teaser drumming up interest for a feature to be shot "with an entirely deaf cast for a mainstream horror audience" according to writer/director Rob Savage. It's genuinely excellent – this isn't a "good cause" movie, other than the good cause of the potential for a really great, frightening horror that's a little bit different from the norm. Head to [www.DawnoftheDeafMovie.com](http://www.DawnoftheDeafMovie.com) for more. ●

## Dreadful thing to watch

➔ Check out *Dracula: Escape The Castle*, a game show on INsight (Sky 564) which mixes puzzles and escape rooms with scare maze aesthetics. Basically, a team of players have to solve problems while they're being mithered by creepy living dolls and deranged scientists. I love it! It's airing now.



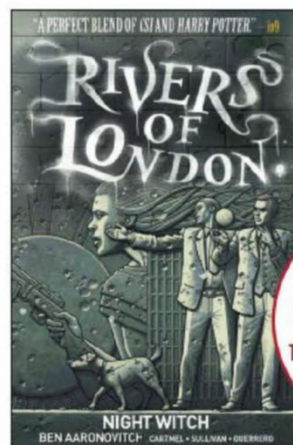


# EXCITING NEW GRAPHIC NOVELS FROM TITAN COMICS!



SEX, INTRIGUE,  
AND CONSPIRACY...  
ROBOTS, DEATH, AND  
TRANSCENDENT JOY!

**SKYDOLL: SPACESHIP**  
ON SALE DECEMBER • £23.99



ALL-NEW  
COMICS STORY  
BY BEN AARONOVITCH.  
TAKES PLACE BEFORE  
THE NEW NOVEL – *THE  
HANGING TREE!*

**RIVERS OF LONDON: NIGHT WITCH**  
ON SALE NOW • £13.99



PREQUEL TO THE  
DISHONORED 2 GAME  
OUT NOW!

**DISHONORED**  
ON SALE DECEMBER • £13.99



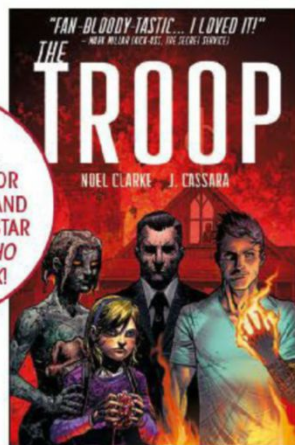
PERFECT FOR  
FANS OF USAGI  
YUJIMBO AND LONE  
WOLF AND CUB!

**SAMURAI: ISLE WITH NO NAME**  
ON SALE NOW • £13.99



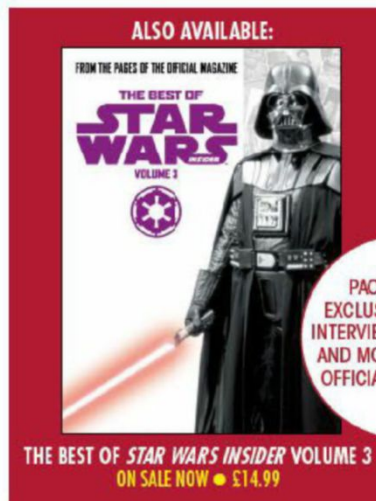
WWII  
DOGFIGHTING  
ACTION FROM GARTH  
ENNIS, CO-CREATOR  
OF *PREACHER* AND  
*THE BOYS!*

**JOHNNY RED: THE HURRICANE**  
ON SALE NOW • £17.99



FROM  
NOEL CLARKE,  
WRITER/DIRECTOR  
OF *ADULTHOOD AND  
BROTHERHOOD*, STAR  
OF *DOCTOR WHO*  
AND *STAR TREK!*

**THE TROOP**  
ON SALE NOW • £15.99



PACKED WITH  
EXCLUSIVE PHOTOS,  
INTERVIEWS, FEATURES  
AND MORE FROM THE  
OFFICIAL MAGAZINE!

**THE BEST OF STAR WARS INSIDER VOLUME 3**  
ON SALE NOW • £14.99

**WWW.TITAN-COMICS.COM**  
AVAILABLE IN PRINT AND DIGITALLY

© & TM 2016 Lucasfilm Ltd. / Rivers of London © Ben Aaronovitch 2016. / © Johnny Red Egmont UK Ltd 2016 / © Editions Soleil / Di Giorgio / Genet / © 2016 Bethesda Softworks LLC, a ZeniMax Media company.  
All Rights Reserved. / © 2016 Noel Clarke. All Rights Reserved. / © EDITIONS SOLEIL / BARBUCCI / CANEPA © EDITIONS SOLEIL / BARBUCCI / CANEPA







## MADE IN CHINA

China's number one science fiction writer, the Hugo Award-winning author **Cixin Liu**, discusses SF in his homeland



“LIKE A MIRROR,  
SCIENCE  
FICTION  
REFLECTS  
CHINA'S  
DEVELOPMENT”

**A**s it faces the future, Chinese society is witnessing rapid development and change, with risk and hope coexisting, and opportunities and challenges. Such an environment is fertile soil for the development of science fiction, and has contributed to the genre's meteoric growth in this country.

Like a mirror, science fiction reflects China's development. In the science fiction of the 20th century, China played a peripheral role in the future. Back then, there were no Chinese superheroes. Even in the Chinese reader's mind, the future of the world and the fate of humankind depended on the superpowers – the United States and the USSR – rather than China. But as China's modernisation gains pace, Chinese readers have started to believe that their country can play – will play – a leading role in the future of the world. For example, in my own *The Three-Body Problem*, many of the heroes and antiheroes are Chinese – Chinese readers have not been uncomfortable with this setting. My story *Sun Of China* [published in the UK in 2012] also features optimism about the country creating its future. The protagonist is a migrant worker, a “spider man”, who cleans city's high-rise buildings. Belonging to the underclass, he takes a tough job with a meagre income and has no right to settle in the city as a permanent citizen. In the story, China has unfurled a huge mirror in geosynchronous orbit to adjust the climate and increase crop production. But the “Chinese Sun” needs to be kept spotless and to save money the government hires migrant workers and sends them into space to clean and polish. The protagonist gets the job thanks to his experience as a “spider man” and starts a new life in orbit. By the end of the story, our hero, a peasant from China's poorest northwestern countryside has turned the giant mirror into a solar sail, and leaves the solar system for the stars.

Of course, the conflicts and crises confronting Chinese society can be manifested explicitly or symbolically in science fiction. For example, Chen Qiufan's *The Waste Tide*, which won Best Novel category in China's Nebula Awards in 2013 has depicted a both familiar and unfamiliar environment: with the invasion of capital, an island has become an electronic waste dump. People scavenge for living materials and resources among the mountains of e-waste, which makes them evolve into a strange man-machine hybrid.

But such reflections of reality do not constitute the popular mainstream of Chinese science fiction. Contemporary Chinese science fiction has moved further and further away from reality, becoming more ethereal and philosophical. So an interesting conclusion can be drawn: the most profound reflection of reality in Chinese science fiction lies precisely in its tendency to transcend reality. The further you get from today's Earthbound reality, the closer you get to the future and the deep starry sky. This shows that today's Chinese people, the younger generation in particular, have gone through a profound change in their way of thinking. Their minds have become broader. They have become interested in the universe's grand philosophical questions; they have started to abandon their closed culture and see humanity as a whole.

Science fiction is gaining popularity in a time-honoured civilisation like China, and the old Chinese nation has begun to raise its head and look to the stars. What will happen next? That is, in itself, a very science fictional thing. ●

*Death's End, the final book in Cixin Liu's Three-Body Problem series, is out now from Head Of Zeus.*



November 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup>

TCL Chinese Theatre

Los Angeles, California

- Place bids in person, via telephone, or online
- Follow the auction online with the live-streaming webcast

**Register Now**

November 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup>

TCL Chinese Theatre  
Los Angeles, California

twilightsagauction.com





# WASP

by Eric Frank Russell, 1957

Joanne Harris on a book about a future we sort of came to know



**Based on the premise that** even a wasp, armed only with its sting, can, in the right circumstances, cause the destruction of a moving vehicle and all its passengers, *Wasp* is at the same time a rollicking (and very funny) adventure story and a sly commentary on the nature of society: its fears; its instability; its lack of safety in numbers; and the role of the individual in a complicated, impersonal world.

Set during the galactic war between the Terran and the Sirian Empires, it tells of James Mowry, reluctant recruit to the Terran intelligence service. Mowry is known as a “wasp”: a solitary agent, in disguise as a Sirian and dropped on an enemy planet with orders to create as much mayhem and paranoia as possible.

Terry Pratchett said that he “couldn’t imagine a funnier terrorist’s handbook”. And that’s exactly what it is; disguised as a story from the golden age of sci-fi and of the Ealing comedy, combining various aspects of both. As such, it should seem dated. In some ways it does – there seem to be no women at all in this *Boy’s Own Paper*-ish romp – and yet, a part of the novel’s charm is this gleeful regression into the past: this story of one trickster, aiming to bring down a planet.

The sci-fi author Jo Walton says: “Read him with your twelve-year-old head.” But in the current climate, a terrorist hero, however comic, can take on a different complexion, even to a twelve-year-old.

Mowry’s plans, among others, involve: printing and distributing counterfeit money; writing slogans on walls; sending out death



threats via the press; recruiting members of the Sirian Underworld to carry out targeted assassinations, while slowly building the myth of a vast, underground organisation working to destabilise the government. “By scrawling suitable words upon a wall, the right man in the right place at the right time might immobilize an armored division with the aid of nothing more than a piece of chalk.”

Neil Gaiman, who once optioned the book for the big screen, says: “I started the script,

wrote about a dozen pages, then September 11th happened, and I let the option lapse; I didn’t think that the world (or at least the US) would be ready for a terrorist hero for a very long time. And he is a terrorist – one man tying up an entire planet’s military might as they look for a huge non-existent organisation, using nothing but the 1950s plot-equivalent of a couple of explosions and a few envelopes filled with anthrax powder.”

The moral ambivalence of *Wasp* is therefore perhaps more apparent now, reading with an adult eye. We are certainly meant to root for Mowry – and we do – but as the story progresses, it becomes clear that the real enemy is not the Sirian people (depicted, in spite of their “alien” features, as no different to humans in their behaviour), but the shadowy governments behind the two warring empires. Mowry is a hero, not because he is a terrorist, or even a patriot, but because he is an individual; subverting the concept of patriotism; serving the Terran empire out of pure self-preservation. Caught between two crushing forces, all he can do is try to survive: a wasp against an armoured tank. It’s an image we can all relate to in a world in which we often struggle with our concept of individuality, and it gives a nice existential twist to this deceptively light little tale. ●

Joanne Harris’s *Runemarks* is re-released by Gollancz on 24 November.

## Like this? Try these!

**THE STAINLESS STEEL RAT**  
by HARRY HARRISON (1961)  
→ Comic space opera, the first of several featuring “Slippery Jim” Bolivar DiGriz – thief, Esperantist, atheist and saviour of the world.

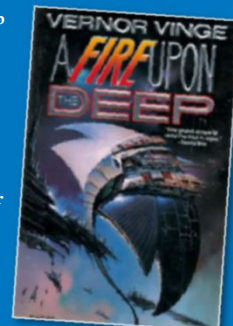


**ROADMARKS**  
by ROGER ZELAZNY (1979)  
→ Underrated fantasy adventure with a comic twist, viewed through two parallel timelines. Contains: assassins; an alternate version of Hitler; a dragon in love with a dinosaur.



## NEXT ISSUE ↓

In our next Book Club (in SFX 282, on sale 7 December), Restoration Game author Ken MacLeod will be writing about esteemed 1992 novel *A Fire Upon The Deep* by Vernor Vinge. Whether you’ve never read it before or fancy giving it another go, this is your chance to read it before a top writer gives his verdict.





*Next Issue*

# MONSTER 2017 PREVIEW!

**Kong: Skull Island** and the biggest movies, TV,  
books and comics of next year...

**Plus!\***

+ Doctor Who + Assassin's Creed  
+ A Monster Calls + Passengers

**SUBSCRIBE  
TO SFX!**

Turn over for details  
.....

**SFX 282 ON SALE WEDNESDAY 7 DECEMBER**

**IN PRINT AND ON YOUR DIGITAL DEVICE**

[bit.ly/buySFXmag](http://bit.ly/buySFXmag)

\* All contents liable to change. They're not monkeying around, you know.



# Subscribe

SAVE LOADS ON SFX AND GET STAR WARS:  
THE FORCE AWAKENS POP! VINYL FIGURES!\*



## REY

Take out a six-month print subscription to SFX and get Rey from Star Wars: The Force Awakens



## HAN SOLO

Get Han Solo and Rey by upgrading to a six-month print + digital bundle subscription!

BEST  
VALUE

**Subscribe now!**

Online [myfavouritemagazines.co.uk/SFXsubs](http://myfavouritemagazines.co.uk/SFXsubs)  
or Phone **0344 848 2852**

Quote **SFXP36** (print), **SFXP33** (digital) or **SFXP35** (print + digital bundle)

(Please use the full web address to claim your free gifts. Digital-only subscriptions do not include free gift.)

\* Print and print + digital subscriptions only.





In addition to getting one (or two) pilots of the Millennium Falcon, you'll also receive:

- Exclusive subscriber only covers
- Six months of *SFX* delivered to your door
- Brilliant value – save £££s on the cover price
- Money-back guarantee

## Choose your package!

### PRINT

Six months of *SFX* in print, plus a Rey POP! Vinyl figure



ONLY  
**£24.50**  
FOR 6 MONTHS!



### DIGITAL

Six months of *SFX* on your iOS or Android device



ONLY  
**£14**  
FOR 6 MONTHS!



### PRINT + DIGITAL

**BEST  
VALUE**

Six months of *SFX* in print and digital, plus Rey and Han Solo POP! Vinyl figures



ONLY  
**£29**  
FOR 6 MONTHS!



**TERMS AND CONDITIONS** Gift is available to new UK print subscribers and print-digital subscribers paying by monthly Direct Debit only. Please allow up to 30 days for delivery of your gift. Gift is subject to availability. Offer is for Rey POP! Vinyl with print subscription and Rey POP! Vinyl and Han Solo POP! Vinyl with bundle subscription. In the event of stocks becoming exhausted we reserve the right to replace with items of a similar value. Prices and savings quoted are compared to buying full priced UK print and digital issues. You will receive 13 issues in a year. You can write to us or call us to cancel your subscription within 14 days of purchase. Your subscription is for the minimum term specified and will expire at the end of the current term. Payment is non-refundable after the 14 day cancellation period unless exceptional circumstances apply. Your statutory rights are not affected. Prices correct at point of print and subject to change. For full terms and conditions please visit <http://myfavouritemagazines.co.uk/terms>. Offer ends 7 December 2016.



ROGUE ONE  
A STAR WARS STORY



# A DEATH STAR IS BORN



Look at the size of that thing! **ROGUE ONE** is a *Star Wars* movie like we've never seen before, the story of the Rebel spies who stole the plans to the first dreaded Death Star. Richard Edwards has the inside info







YOU'D BE FORGIVEN FOR THINKING THAT THE FATE OF EVERY CREATURE, WAR AND POLITICAL MOVEMENT IN A CERTAIN GALAXY FAR, FAR AWAY REVOLVED AROUND THE SKYWALKER FAMILY. ANAKIN, HIS KIDS LUKE AND LEIA, AND HIS GRANDSON BEN HAVE PLAYED SUCH PIVOTAL ROLES IN EVERY STAR WARS MOVIE SO FAR THAT IT'S TEMPTING TO BELIEVE THAT EVERYTHING JUST GOES INTO STASIS WHEN THEY'RE NOT AROUND.

# ROGUE ONE: A STAR WARS STORY

IS ABOUT TO REDRESS THAT BALANCE.

## The first of the so-called "anthology" movies

– standalone stories filling in gaps in the *Star Wars* chronology away from the Skywalker family saga recounted in the "Episodes"  
– *Rogue One* literally goes back to the very beginning of the *Star Wars* phenomenon. Or, to be more accurate, the second paragraph of *A New Hope*'s opening crawl:

During the battle, Rebel spies managed to steal secret plans to the Empire's ultimate weapon, the DEATH STAR, an armored space station with enough power to destroy an entire planet.

*Rogue One* tells the story of those previously unidentified Rebel spies and their mission – while we know what ultimately happened to those famous plans, we have no idea how they got there, or the fate of the people who obtained them.

"Normally you have a really good set-up and beginning to a film, and the big challenge is how to end it," says Gareth Edwards, the *Monsters* and *Godzilla* director taking the helm for *Rogue One*. "Usually that's the thing they're brainstorming a million times. On this one we kind of knew where we were heading, but it's more about how we begin that journey. It was the polar opposite problem of what you usually have, and it felt like a better problem to have because I feel like films as you watch them should get stronger and climax at the end. So to sort of be confident in where we were going and know that there was this build-up that was going to hopefully be the reward of the film, it felt like a really good starting point.

"But just sticking *Star Wars* on a poster doesn't make it a *Star Wars* film," he adds. "We were trying to get that magical combination that we all grew up with – that mixture of epic canvas but with a sort of emotional core at the heart about a small group of people who are sometimes connected by family. It just felt very Shakespearean. It was what George Lucas was borrowing from when he did the originals."

## REBEL YELL

With the Skywalker involvement limited (we *think*) to a supporting role for Darth Vader (there was no way Lucasfilm was going to let the Sith Lord sit this one out), *Rogue One* features an all-new team of Rebel heroes – characters who, crucially, don't have lightsabers and the Force to fall back on. They're led by Jyn Erso (Felicity Jones), a wild child who's been living on her own since she was 15, and whose father Galen (Mads Mikkelsen) may just hold the key to the Death Star's powers – yet more daddy issues in the *Star Wars* series...

Continued on p54 →





Director Krennic:  
pretty mean, *and* has  
some handy guards.

# BATTLE STATIONS!

Star Wars' weapons of mass destruction compared

## DEATH STAR AS SEEN IN A NEW HOPE

**Diameter 120km**  
Operational from 0 years after Battle of Yavin



Initially planned before the fall of the Republic, the top secret Death Star was already under construction by the time Palpatine declared himself Emperor. Early stages of building took place above Geonosis, whose bug-like population was later wiped out by the Empire to help keep the weapon's existence classified – a status they managed to maintain for two decades. Galen Erso, Jyn's dad, was recruited by Imperial officer Orson Krennic because he saw the scientist's groundbreaking energy research as key to powering the weapon. Its exhaust port was surprisingly vulnerable to attack from Rebel snub fighters.

## DEATH STAR II AS SEEN IN RETURN OF THE JEDI

**Diameter 160km**  
Operational from 4 ABY



Because one superweapon is never enough, the Empire built a bigger, more powerful Death Star II. It came with optional extras like a tower at the north pole to house Palpatine's throne room, and a protective energy shield generated from the nearby Forest Moon of Endor. As well as using it as a display of Imperial strength, the Emperor also intended it be bait for the Rebels, selling misinformation to the Bothan spies about its readiness, and leaving the outside conspicuously unfinished while prioritising making the weapon systems operational. Its reactor core was surprisingly vulnerable to attack from Rebel snub fighters.

## STARKILLER BASE AS SEEN IN THE FORCE AWAKENS

**Diameter 660km**  
Operational from 34 ABY



If Imperial fanboys the First Order displayed a slight lack of originality by building their own spherical superweapon, they did at least do it in style – why waste time making your WMD from scratch when you grab an entire planet and hollow it out to turn it into a bespoke superweapon that also doubles as a classy base of operations? Like its predecessor it was protected by an energy shield, but Starkiller Base had the added USPs of being powered by draining a star, *and* the ability to destroy an entire star system from a distance. Its thermal oscillator was surprisingly vulnerable to attack from Resistance snub fighters.



# ROGUE'S

A who's who of the latest *Star Wars* Story

## JYN ERSO

alias Felicity Jones



A self-confessed rebel with a rap sheet including forging Imperial documents, assault, resisting arrest and more. She's the daughter of noted scientist Galen Erso - apparently a major reason she was recruited for the Death Star mission, although she's been fending for herself since she was 15.



## CAPTAIN CASSIAN ANDOR

alias Diego Luna



A Rebel Alliance intelligence officer responsible for supervising and accompanying Jyn Erso on the mission to steal Death Star plans. Reports say he is calm under pressure and has the ability to deliver results even when operating with minimal resources.



## BODHI ROOK

alias Riz Ahmed



Conscripted to be a cargo pilot for the Empire, this native of the planet Jedha has since defected to join the Rebel cause - though he still wears Imperial insignia on his uniform. Highly skilled but anxious.



## BAZE MALBUS

alias Wen Jiang



Chirrut Îmwe's bodyguard and friend, but with a rather different outlook on life - less interested in spirituality and the Force, more interested in using heavy weaponry. No love for the Empire, who he accuses of "destroying my home".



## K-2SO

alias Alan Tudyk



Built as an Imperial "enforcer" droid (essentially a 7' 1" security guy), he's since been reprogrammed by Captain Andor to become part of the Rebel Alliance. Tact circuits are clearly malfunctioning because he reportedly has a tendency to say whatever he wants.



## GALEN ERSO

alias Mads Mikkelsen



Expert on energy generation, hired by Director Orson Krennic to work on the Death Star project - though Erso believes his research will be used in more humanitarian ways. Has a history with Krennic, who rescued him, wife Lyra and daughter Jyn from Separatists during the Clone Wars.





# GALLERY

## SAW GERRERA

alias Forest Whitaker



A key figure in the old resistance movement on Onderon who fought alongside General Anakin Skywalker during the Clone Wars. Has since become a fighter on the extreme wing of the Rebel Alliance – and has various cybernetic limbs/implants.



## CHIRRUT ÎMWE

alias Donnie Yen



Another resident of the Jedi holy world of Jedha, Îmwe may not be Force-sensitive but that doesn't stop him following the Jedi religion – he believes all living things are connected through the Force. Although blind, he's a skilled warrior with a staff.



## MON MOTHMA

alias Genevieve O'Reilly



A long-standing Chandrilan politician and known to be one of the leaders of the Rebel Alliance – will probably be able to devote more time to that when the Emperor disbands the Imperial Senate.



## SENATOR BAIL ORGANA

alias Jimmy Smits



**SUSPECTED**

Alderaan nobleman and suspected Rebel sympathiser. His Earth alter ego Jimmy Smits has apparently confirmed he'll be involved with the *Rogue One* plot.



## KEY IMPERIAL FIGURES



### DIRECTOR ORSON KRENNIC

alias Ben Mendelsohn

First came on board the Death Star project when it began under then-Chancellor Palpatine in the Old Republic, and is now director of Advanced Weapons Research for the Empire. After more than 20 years of development, he's determined to see his battle station become operational.



### DARTH VADER

alias James Earl Jones and (rumoured) Spencer Wilding

**Big. Imposing. Heavy breather. Skilled with the Force.** You may have heard of him. The question is, is Director Krennic holding his leash, or is it the other way around?



# CRAWL WONDER

*Rogue One* was inspired by *A New Hope*'s opening crawl.  
We analyse those famous yellow words for intel...

Episode IV

## A NEW HOPE

It is a period of civil war. Rebel spaceships, striking from a hidden base, have won their first victory against the evil Galactic Empire.

In *Star Wars Rebels* we see small Rebel cells and a nascent Alliance engaged in minor strikes against the Empire. The conflict clearly escalates significantly in the intervening five years.

Going on what we see in the *Rogue One* trailer, we suspect this is the base on Yavin IV - still the Rebels' home in *A New Hope*.

During the battle, Rebel spies managed to steal secret plans to the Empire's ultimate weapon, the DEATH STAR, an armored space station with enough power to destroy an entire planet.

We've known for nearly 40 years that this means Darth Vader. Does this hint that the Sith Lord, already confirmed to appear in the movie, will be a major player in the final act? Perhaps Krennic brings him into play when he realises the plans have gone AWOL.

We all know that *Rogue One* is about the mission to steal those infamous Death Star plans - it's the movie's main selling point. But this line hints at something else going on, that Jyn Erso and the team's spy mission will take place against the backdrop of a major battle - a skirmish **POTENTIAL SPOILER!** the Rebel Alliance will win. The X-Wings in action and AT-AST-starring ground assaults in the trailers would seem to bear this out.

Pursued by the Empire's sinister agents, Princess Leia races home aboard her starship, custodian of the stolen plans that can save her people and restore freedom to the galaxy....

Rumour has it that *Rogue One* finishes just 10 minutes before *A New Hope* kicks off. Does that mean the film will end with Leia, Captain Antilles, R2-D2 and C-3PO receiving the plans on the Tantive IV blockade runner? Director Gareth Edwards is reluctant to confirm. "It would kind of be a real spoiler," he says, "but the film is definitely the events that lead up to *A New Hope*, and so how close it gets I want to leave for the audience to find out when they go see it."



# STAR WARS™

## THE STAR WARS™ FULLY LICENSED BLUETOOTH SPEAKERS BY ACW

**COMING SOON - 2016**

*Darth Vader* - the most  
dreaded Sith Lord in the  
Star Wars Universe

**SFX** ★★★★★



★ A keeper! ★

**Trusted  
Reviews** ★★★★★



**ORDER NOW £149.00**

DIRECT FROM OUR WEBSITE [HTTP://ACWORLDWIDE.COOL](http://acworldwide.cool)



AWESOME AND COOL UK



@AWESOMECOOLOK

[INFO@ACWORLDWIDE.COOL](mailto:info@acworldwide.cool)

**LUCASFILM**  
Ltd.  
© & ™ Lucasfilm Ltd.

**Acworldwide**  
in partnership with  
exertis Unlimited

**Disney**



"Jyn is not like some of the other characters in other *Star Wars* films where it's sort of been their pre-destiny to become the hero, that in some magical way it was always going to be the case that they would save the galaxy," says Edwards. "Jyn was on a trajectory to have a totally different life, and something happens early on in the film and early on in her life that shatters everything and sends her on a different path. I wanted it to feel this was not someone who was born to be a soldier, that she was meant for something else and got forced into that life. This might not end well for her, and I think that makes you more invested rather than someone who's just tough from day one and kicks ass all the time."

## BOY OR GIRL?

Like *The Force Awakens*, *Rogue One* is anchored by a female lead. It's an idea that existed in ILM effects whiz (and Photoshop co-creator) John Knoll's original story treatment for the movie, and an element that Edwards was always keen to retain. "Part of the process of making this film was to look at the ingredients that make *A New Hope* and then flip a load of them and see what works," he recalls. "The obvious one is that the hero is a male, so how about a female hero here? That seemed a good choice. It's like with *Alien*, where the classic story is that they didn't write Ripley for a woman, they wrote it for a man, and at the last minute did a casting choice change where it became Sigourney Weaver. I think if we swapped Jyn today to a male, there's nothing in there really that would

Continued on p58 →



Wonder if he feels conspicuous as the only one not in black?



Stormtroopers on their holidays! Okay, not really.

# DEATH STAR BY DESIGN

*Star Wars* set decorator Roger Christian tells Oliver Pfeiffer how he helped assemble the Empire's original WMD

"Don't be too proud of this technological terror you've constructed. The ability to destroy a planet is insignificant next to the power of the Force," declared Darth Vader, to a pigheaded Admiral Motti after he gloated about the undefeatable power of their new battle station in *A New Hope*. Although the warnings of the Dark Lord did ultimately ring true and despite several subsequent annihilations, the Empire's intimidatingly designed moon-shaped base continues – as will be reinforced in upcoming prequel *Rogue One* – to be a looming threat in the *Star Wars* universe. This iconic symbol of mass destruction has, in various guises and stages of construction, made appearances in all but two movies to date, an unstoppable force to be reckoned with.

"The sets were really kind of simple but complicated and thus believable," says Oscar-winning set decorator Roger Christian, who worked on the original interiors of the Death Star at Elstree Studios. "It looked like a functioning Death Star. [Production designer] John Barry wanted it darker so that it was almost black – to express that kind of evil look. It was just perfect in its simplicity: in a way like Albert Speers's architecture design in Germany, which was simple but very compelling when you looked at it. That was kind of an inspiration," he says, referring to the imposing design work of Hitler's infamous chief architect.

In contrast to the lived-in look of the Millennium Falcon, which Christian constructed using aeroplane scrap parts, the Death Star had a different approach and aesthetic. "It wasn't like the used, old Tatooine world or the Falcon world, it was a

much more engineered and precise world. We had to find anything that could be much newer looking; more like [what was accomplished] in Stanley Kubrick's *2001*."

The set decorator-turned-filmmaker (*Black Angel*, *Nostradamus*) has fond memories of working with production designer John Barry. "His talent was to understand what visually would express a character's attitude. It was a huge set and expensive so we used this special back-forming machine and John found that he could back form plastic panels and stick those up so it had a kind of uniformity."

The Death Star's trash compactor set proved to be another challenge for Christian. "We built the pit and filled it with water and then I realised we were going to have the actors in there [laughs]! So I couldn't put all the heavy scrap that looked really good in there as they would've got hurt and it would've sunk because it was too heavy," he reveals. "In the end I got the plasterer's shop to make them into polystyrene. The problem was whenever polystyrene breaks you see the white, so we also had to inject it so it wouldn't spoil the shot."

With *Rogue One* hinging on the recovery of the plans to the battle station, all eyes will be on how successful Gareth Edwards and his creative team have been in replicating the now iconic 40 year old design.

"So far, with what JJ Abrams achieved in *The Force Awakens*, they've been very reverent [to the originals] so it will certainly be interesting to see," enthuses Christian. "When I was on the set of the original it was just awesome and when you see it on film it's believable. To me that's why the design endures: it doesn't look like a science fiction set." ●



## MASSIVE ATTACK

Four more colossal  
super-weapons



### THE REALITY BOMB

**Doctor Who, "Journey's End"**

For epic scale it's hard to beat Davros's suicidal scheme to use a planet-sized Dalek spacestation *plus* 26 stolen planets (and one stolen moon!) to transmit an electromagnetic cancelling wave capable of wiping out the entire universe (*and* disintegrating Gita off *EastEnders*).

### THE HALO ARRAY

**Halo videogames**

This network of seven ring-shaped artificial worlds, each 10,000 km across and separated by thousands of light years, is capable of wiping out all sentient life in the Milky Way via the superluminal conveyance of a burst of cross-phased super-massive neutrinos. Try saying *that* after a couple of gins.

### WARWORLD

**The DC universe**

In a textbook case of nominative determinism, alien race the Warzoons created this artificial satellite bristling with laser-cannons and nuclear missiles, operated mentally from a control chair. Unfortunately the stress it puts on the controller's brain eventually kills them. Cue Warzoon extinction. If only they'd been called the Peacezoons, eh?

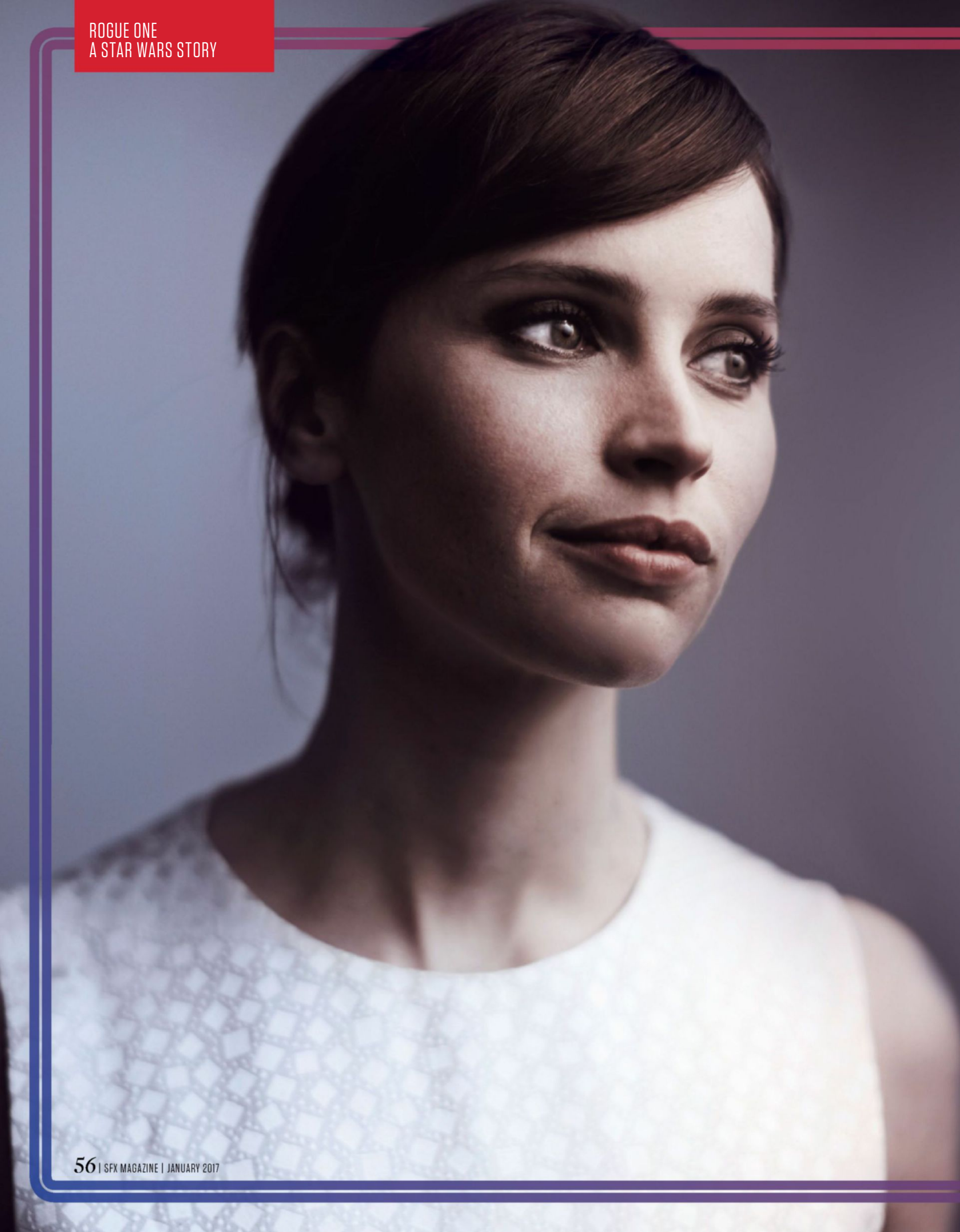
### THE PLANET KILLER

**Star Trek, "The Doomsday Machine"**

Looking like a ginormous hollowed-out root vegetable, this automated vessel, big enough to swallow a dozen starships, carves up planets with an antiproton beam, then gobbles up the rubble as fuel. A neutronium hull makes it invulnerable to attack - unless you know someone crazy enough to pilot a starship *inside* and blow it up... **Ian Berriman**











# "JYN'S COMPLICATED. IT'S WHAT I LIKE ABOUT HER"

Felicity Jones plays Rebel team leader Jyn Erso

Portrait by Maarten de Boer

## What can you tell us about Jyn Erso?

● She's really thrown into a situation that she's not expecting. All of the Rebels have had some kind of struggle in their past, they haven't had easy lives, and they all come together and are united in something they believe in. But she's complicated, which is what I like about her. She's resourceful when she has to be, but she has also had to stand up for herself. She's determined, but there's a humanity to her, which I hope comes through. She has real empathy and affection for the team around her.

## Gareth Edwards has talked about how he wanted to make the movie gritty and realistic. Was making *Rogue One* like making *The Revenant*?

● It was interesting hearing the stories about *The Revenant*, because it did feel very similar to making *Rogue One*. It was so important to bring authenticity. In this one, Stormtroopers are not all completely white and clean. They've got scratches on them and they've been through difficult times. At every level it was bringing a level of reality. I love shooting like that. It was great to work with someone like Gareth who kept it very fresh, who would say to go with your instinct. It brought such freshness to it, which I think audiences are really ready for.

## Was there a moment where you thought, "Yeah, now I know I'm in *Star Wars*"?

● Pretty much every day, because there's so much detail. We would be in the ships, and you can press all the buttons and they connect, and things light up. It's really fun, actually – the less acting you have to do the better, because it's going to make it more realistic eventually. You actually felt like you were in the world of *Star Wars*.

## Is there a hint of romance with Diego Luna's character, Cassian Andor?

● I can't say... But there may be! You'll have to wait and see. There's definitely a connection and that's what's so beautiful about *Star Wars* – I think why people love it is the relationships, the fondness that these characters have for each other. There will definitely be some tender moments in the film.

## You have the honour of saying "May the Force be with us". How do you prepare for such an iconic line?

● It's like "to be or not to be" or something. You've got to really make sure you get it right, otherwise you're going to feel really stupid. So I was just walking around my house saying it, over and over again, trying different pauses for

different effects. But when I actually said it, I totally just channelled the Force to get it out!

## There's loads of secrecy around a *Star Wars* movie. Has it been frustrating not being able to talk to people?

● Yeah, you end up just seeming like you're a spy or something, really secretive. You get home from work and your friends and family are like, "Did you have a nice day today?" Yep. "Can you tell us about it?" No, nothing happened. It is really hard actually, because you get excited and you want to talk about it. The stream of consciousness has to be monitored, definitely.

## Did you have any good visitors on set?

● Mark Hamill came to visit. *The Empire Strikes Back* is a massive inspiration for *Rogue One*, so Gareth and I were almost bowing down to him. It was really special to meet him. He always comes across so well, just a genuine person who hasn't been affected by that incredible thing.

## Did he have any advice for handling the fame?

● Actually he just said to enjoy it – that it's a bit of a rollercoaster, but you're on it now, so just enjoy it as much as you can.



Gareth Edwards prepares his cast for battles ahead.

We reckon you're unlikely to see Ewoks in this movie...

© GETTY (1)





Will you be able to predict what Saw Gerrera does from watching *The Clone Wars*?

contradict that. Jyn's not written as a girl, she's written as a person, and it just happened to be a woman that we cast."

While some veterans of the Rebellion are back in action – we've already seen Rebel leader Mon Mothma, Jimmy Smits has strongly hinted his Bail Organa will cameo, and we suspect there's a strong chance of Princess Leia being back with her classic hairdo by the end credits – Jyn will be accompanied on her mission by a whole new team. And just because this is a *Star Wars* prequel doesn't mean we have to have Jar Jar Binks – these guys would eat him for breakfast.

There's Rebel intelligence officer Cassian Andor (Diego Luna); his enforcer droid K-2SO (a performance-captured Alan Tudyk); blind, monkish worshipper of the Jedi faith Chirrut Îmwe (Donnie Yen); his friend and protector Baze Malbus (Jiang Wen); pilot Bodhi Rook

"EVERYBODY HAS A BACKSTORY IN OUR FILM. EVERYBODY HAS SOMETHING THAT HAPPENED TO THEM THAT CAUSED THEM TO BE IN THIS SITUATION"

(Riz Ahmed); and veteran Rebel Saw Gerrera (Forest Whitaker, reinventing a character who first appeared in the *Clone Wars* cartoon). Edwards says he's keen that each one of them should have a history – even if it's not retold in massive detail on screen.

"What's so good about the backstories in *Star Wars* is with Han Solo, even Luke with his father, you don't get, like, a 10-minute conversation about it," he explains. "You just skim that Han owes money to Jabba, and that's kind of it, or you're told in the first *Star Wars* that Luke's dad was a pilot, and he was killed by Darth Vader. It's very short little ideas, and they set your imagination running. Everybody has a backstory in our film, and everybody has something that happened to them that caused them to be in this situation [fighting the Empire]. We have an ensemble, so [it's about] servicing all those characters in a way that doesn't interfere with the pace of the film and the story – hopefully we've got the balance right, with enough hints and glimpses, but never the whole thing. Some novel can pursue what that story was about!"

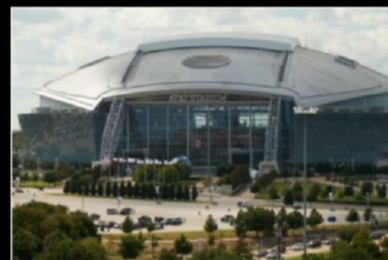
Being set immediately before *A New Hope* puts *Rogue One* in a tricky position. We know what the *Star Wars* universe looked like in that time period because

Continued on p60 →



## THAT'S NO MOON...

The Death Star beyond *Star Wars*



● The AT&T Stadium in Texas – home of the Dallas Cowboys – is known locally as the Death Star on account of its giant, grey retracting roof.

● Seattle-spawned alt.rock band The Presidents Of The United States Of America released the song "Death Star" in 2000. Contains the stirring couplet, "Death Star, massive and maniacal/Death Star, teeny weeny vulnerable hole."

● Industrial Light And Magic christened their San Francisco render farm the Death Star. It's a ginormous, high-powered supercomputer but cannot, as yet, take out rival FX houses.

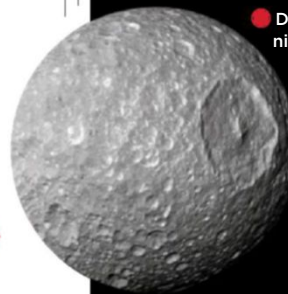
● German digital hardcore band Atari Teenage Riot included the ditty "Death Star" on their 1997 album "Burn, Berlin, Burn!" We like to imagine Grand Moff Tarkin tapping his jackboots to the soulful confession "I only destroy to demonstrate my powers."



● Kevin Smith's slacker-championing comedy *Clerks* (1994) sees two Generation Xers debating whether the workmen killed on the Death Star were really innocent independent contractors. The new age of pop-culture savvy dialogue begins here.

● Disgraced Californian energy company Enron named one of their scandalous business practices the Death Star Strategy. Palpatine would have approved. And then Force-zapped the board for being caught.

● Death Star is the nickname of Mimas, a moon of Saturn, whose giant impact crater resembles the concave superlaser dish of the Imperial battle station. Hold on, this one actually is a moon...  
Nick Setchfield







**Plays the  
Star Wars  
theme**

**Lightsabers  
Illuminate**

**Not sold  
in stores!**

Shown smaller than actual height  
of 16 inches (40.6 cm) in height.

Requires 1 x 'AA' and 3 x 'AAA'  
batteries (not included).

©2015 Lucasfilm Ltd & TM.  
All rights reserved.

© The Bradford Exchange. \* S&H - Service & Handling. Offer applies to UK only. A credit  
check may be carried out by a licensed Credit Reference Agency. Our guarantee is in  
addition to the rights provided to you by consumer protection regulations.  
01-22479-001

**Fastest way to order** | **Or call our 24hr hotline**  
**www.bradford.co.uk** | **0333 003 0019**

In the search box, please enter **STAR WARS CLOCK**

Quote reference code **P333831**

# STAR WARS

## Sith vs. Jedi Clock

### Light or Darkness...

The climactic battle of *The Return of the Jedi* inspires *The Star Wars™: Sith vs. Jedi Clock*, available exclusively from The Bradford Exchange.

- Fully sculpted, handpainted figures of Darth Vader, Emperor Palpatine and Luke Skywalker
- Lightsabers and the fight scene illuminate
- The hanging weights are the hilt of Luke and Vader's lightsabers
- The Millennium Falcon is fully sculpted
- Artwork of the space battle of Endor appears on the top of the clock
- The pendulum features the Empire and Alliance insignias

### Strong demand expected: Order today!

*The Star Wars™: Sith vs. Jedi Clock* comes with a Certificate of Authenticity and our famous 365-day money-back guarantee. Issued in a strictly limited edition, it is available for just five instalments of £29.99 – that's only £149.95 (plus £9.99 S&H)\*. Pay nothing now – simply complete and return the Reservation Application today!

## PAY NOTHING NOW

### RESERVATION APPLICATION

#### Please Respond Promptly

To: The Bradford Exchange, PO Box 653, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 4RA

**YES!** Please reserve \_\_\_(Qty) of the *Star Wars™: Sith vs. Jedi Clock* for me as described in this advertisement. I need **PAY NOTHING NOW!**

**Complete today or Call 0333 003 0019**

Name (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms) \_\_\_\_\_  
(PLEASE PRINT)

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Applicants must be aged 18 years of age or over. UK mainland addresses only. Please note, we may contact you via email and mobile with information about your reservation and other relevant offers. From time to time, the Bradford Exchange may allow carefully screened third party companies to contact you. Please tick the boxes if you do not wish to receive such communications by: Email ☐ Telephone/Mobile ☐ Third Party Companies ☐

THE  
BRADFORD EXCHANGE

01-22479-001

Order Ref: P333831





we've been watching the original movie for nearly 40 years. But in the subsequent four decades, visual effects have moved on to the point where pretty much anything a filmmaker can imagine can be put on screen. How do you reconcile those two factors?

"We've tried to be careful with the whole seduction of CG," Edwards reassures us. "It's really tempting, because you can do certain things now you want to do them. And there's a language to cinema that's evolved a bit because of that, which is not the same language that you had in *A New Hope*, *Empire* and *Jedi*. So we've been trying to do things visually in the computer that you can only really do with models and practical filming, and we're being careful to try and police that."

## KEEPING THE FAITH

In a similar way, the new spaceships and Stormtrooper designs (like the black-clad Deathtroopers) that feature in *Rogue One* have all been created to stay faithful to the X-Wings, TIE Fighters and other design classics they'll be appearing alongside – after all, just because we didn't see them in the original trilogy doesn't mean they didn't exist in some other far-flung corner of the galaxy.

"In your brain you think *Star Wars* is 50% sci-fi and 50% historical/real world, but it's really like 90% historical/real world and 10% science fiction," Edwards explains. "To the point where when they were designing all the weapons and the guns, one of the first faux pas I committed is they would show me ideas for guns for Deathtroopers. They'd have all these different designs and you'd say, this one feels too antiquated, this one feels like something they'd have in World War 2. They'd say that's exactly the Stormtrooper weapon from *A New Hope*. [Back then] they were just grabbing real world guns and costume, and just doing a little thing to it that made it feel like →



# LIFE AND DARTH

Kieron Gillen, writer of Marvel's *Star Wars: Darth Vader*, tells us why the Dark Lord of the Sith is cinema's most enduring villain

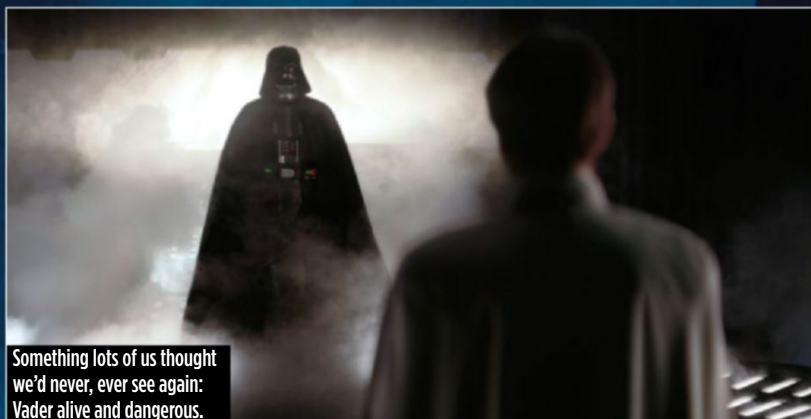
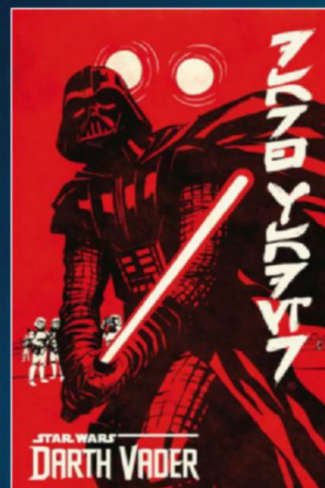
I've spent the last two and a half years with Darth Vader in my head. In fact, I realised about halfway through writing *Star Wars: Darth Vader* that, unless I'm forgetting someone, I've written more actual-in-canon Darth Vader dialogue than any other individual in history. I'm not sure if that makes me qualified to say why he's such an enduring icon of a villain. I actually suspect that it may make me the person least qualified to argue that.

You ask anyone who writes truly bad people how do they write truly bad people, you're almost certain to get an identical answer: I don't write truly bad people. No one thinks they're a villain. Everyone's a hero of their own story. Due to the aforementioned two and a half years of having someone inside my head who thinks Force-choking their way through an office meeting is a good look, up there, Vader's not a villain.

Thankfully, lower in my body, I've got that black shadow with a sharp handful of red who strode into frame in the first movie I saw in my life. That primal vision overwhelms my recent experience. The gut rules the head in fiction... but the head can at least analyse it.

It's like this.

There is fear in a great villain. One part of this is the Doctor Whovian urge to hide behind the sofa, but it's far more than that. You're afraid for those characters you love who enter a scene with them. It's the part of



Something lots of us thought we'd never, ever see again: Vader alive and dangerous.





you that spent all of *Jessica Jones* saying GET OUT NOW whenever Kilgrave walked in.

There is joy in a great villain. The bit where we relish the fearlessness and inspiration of the cruelty. The bit of us that wants to theatrically cancel Christmas. The bit we don't always like to admit.

There is recognition in the great villain. We may not think we would do as they do, but we understand why they do what they do. They are as coherent a statement as anyone in the cast. You know why you must become Don Corleone. You know why you must push Matti from the roof of the House of Commons. You know that in a choice between making love on a purgatorial chaise longue and war, it must be war.

There is antithesis in a great villain. It is a heroes' story. The villain not only opposes them, but acts as the opposing argument, embodying all the fears and flaws of our leads. Their defeat allows the hero to truly express the justness of their cause, their growth, their rightness... or, provide a question that the hero can never quite manage to answer. Batman and the Joker, forever glaring across the mirror.

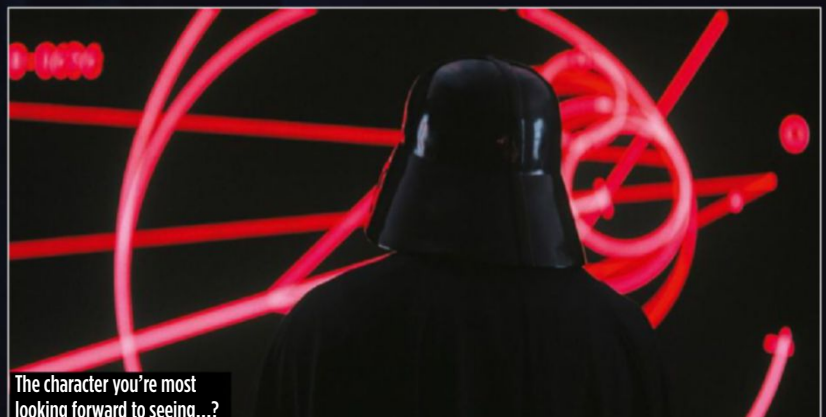
Finally, there is style in a great villain. You make bad look good.

You can make a fantastic villain with a handful of these traits. Vader has all five.

That alone isn't sufficient to explain his status. It's all of that, and one more key thing. At least in some genres, a great story can exist without a great villain... but a great villain cannot exist without being in a great story. Darth Vader had the good fortune to be right in the heart of the pop cultural sensation that created the still dominant mode for mass market cinema entertainment. He had the break, and thanks to that he stands as the most iconic villain of my lifetime, if not the whole 20th century.

Also, awesome cape. ●

*Star Wars: Darth Vader Vol 4 – End Of Games* is published on 17 November.



The character you're most looking forward to seeing...?





The Rebel Alliance is (reasonably) safe in Erso and Andor's hands.

*Star Wars* – if you go too far it's *Flash Gordon*, or it's *Star Trek*.

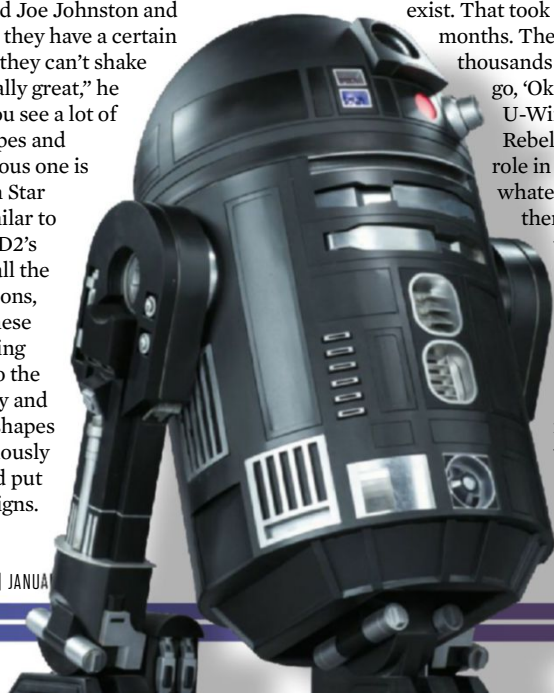
"If you look at the [original designers] Ralph McQuarrie and Joe Johnston and everyone else, they have a certain aesthetic that they can't shake off, and it's really great," he continues. "You see a lot of repetitive shapes and ideas. An obvious one is that the Death Star looks very similar to the top of R2-D2's head. It's got all the same proportions, and you see these shapes recurring throughout, so the trick was to try and look at those shapes and subconsciously copy them and put them into designs.

"But it's like a dream situation to be trying to come up with the ship you didn't see in the original trilogy that feels like it might exist. That took ages, about six months. There were literally thousands of designs – we didn't go, 'Okay, let's design a U-Wing [referring to a new Rebel craft with a starring role in the movie]. It's let's do whatever looks good and then we'll pick a letter of the alphabet that it most looks like!'"

Of course, it wouldn't be a *Star Wars* movie without a couple of new planets, and *Rogue One* is no exception – there's the beautiful tropical island world of Scarif (played in

real life by the Maldives), and Jedha, a desert planet that's like a holy land for the Jedi (now public enemy number one in Palpatine's Empire). Its presence is designed to show the other side of war, beyond the spectacular conflicts that usually form the foundations of the *Star Wars* franchise. "War's not just fighting," says Edwards. "I know it sounds silly to say that, but it's also the aftermath and the price that you pay. Jedha's supposed to represent the occupied territory and the consequence of not being able to do anything

"I WISH SOMEONE HAD TOLD ME 30-40 YEARS AGO THAT I WAS GOING TO GET TO DO THIS; I WOULD HAVE SPENT MY WHOLE LIFE TRYING TO FIGURE IT OUT"







Because everyone needs a droid.



Booked your IMAX seats yet?



Yes, but has he got Han's shooting accuracy?

against the Empire. The concept of that was that if we didn't stop this thing, you'd witness this kind of oppression across the whole galaxy, so the film is peppered throughout with imagery of the consequence of letting evil take over.

"I didn't want to purely make a war film," Edwards laughs, "but there's a lot of visuals in there that I really like and I was itching as a *Star Wars* fan to see!"

## MAKING IT REAL

And that fan element is likely to be a key factor here. Like JJ Abrams, *Episode VIII* director Rian Johnson, *Episode IX*'s Colin Trevorrow and the Han Solo prequel's Phil Lord and Christopher Miller, Edwards grew up on *Star Wars*, he gets it, it's part of his filmmaking DNA. He waxes lyrical about playing with figures as a kid, and recalls conversations with his director of photography where they'd say, "This doesn't feel right does it, that's not quite

*Star Wars*,' and we'd do a little tweak and it feels like *Star Wars* again." Indeed, despite rumours of extra reshoots and other directors taking over the edit – all unconfirmed, we should add – Edwards certainly makes you feel like the movie is in good hands.

"I wish someone had told me 30-40 years ago that I was going to get to do this, because I would have spent my whole life trying to figure it out," he laughs. "The problem is, I never in my wildest dreams thought this was going to happen. I thought George was going to make six films and that was it, and then when they did the Disney announcement, I thought great, I can't wait to see those. And then when you think, 'Hang on, I may be in the running, oh my god I'm going to get to do one...' suddenly there's this switch that flicks. Because when *Star Wars* gets it right it lasts for a lifetime." ●

*Rogue One: A Star Wars Story* opens on 15 December.



# STAR WARS STORIES

The first two trilogies feature plenty of plot gaps and throwaway lines that could be turned into *Rogue One*-style spin-offs...

## ORD MANTELL

The bounty hunter that Han and the Rebels ran into on the planet of Ord Mantell changed his mind about paying off Jabba the Hutt, but what actually happened there? In the old Expanded Universe the bounty hunter was a cybernetically enhanced rogue named Skorr. We'd love to see what kicked off in the new continuity.



## MOS EISLEY CANTINA

So many scoundrels in one place, and even though you only see most of them for mere seconds, it's clear they all have stories to tell. A standalone set in Tatooine's seedy underbelly could get under the skin of a wretched hive of scum and villainy – and even hang out in Jabba's Palace.



## ROGUE TWO

We know that "many Bothans died to bring us this information," but little else about them – they've never even appeared on screen. A companion piece to *Rogue One* could show how the furry spies acquired the key (albeit questionable) intel on Death Star II.

## GALACTIC ACCOUNTANTS

How did the taxation of trade routes to outlying star systems in the Galactic Republic come to be disputed? How does interplanetary finance work? Could the Emperor be toppled for tax evasion? Thankfully nobody in the known universe – not even George Lucas, we suspect – would ever want to see this movie.



# HEROES'



London is about to become an outpost of a galaxy far, far away as the **STAR WARS IDENTITIES** exhibition comes to town. Richard Edwards plays Bothan spy...

*Photography by Joerg Koch*



# JOURNEYS

© & TM 2016 LUCASFILM LTD



**As far back as SFX can remember, we** always wanted to be a Corellian smuggler. Or a bounty hunter. Maybe even an X-Wing pilot. But is the adventure and excitement we crave a realistic target – or the foolish ramblings of a boy who grew up far away from the bright centre of the universe (in the Midlands)? We're about to find out...

SFX has landed at the Munich incarnation of the *Star Wars Identities* exhibition before its contents are loaded onto a transport, given an X-Wing escort and redeployed at London's O2 this month. There have been *Star Wars* exhibitions before, of course, but in addition to the usual props, costumes and concept art (more on those later), *Identities* wants to talk about what makes us all tick – from a scientific standpoint.

"When we started working with Lucasfilm on the project, the only challenge they had given us was they wanted to focus on the characters of *Star Wars*," says Geneviève Angio-Morneau, a museologist who played a key role in assembling *Identities*. "Other exhibitions have had science factors, other elements that could more easily be associated with *Star Wars* like space travel and robots... So at first, we were a little bit surprised. I was like, 'How do we work with these characters, and get a more scientific angle?' So we started brainstorming. We were looking into mythology, but obviously that's not terribly scientific. But when we were reading about mythology, we read a lot about the hero's journey – so Joseph Campbell's writing [his work was a major influence on George Lucas when he made *Star Wars*]. We started thinking about how a person grows from their childhood to their adult life. Obviously, there's psychology, there's genetics, there's behaviour, there's all of these different sciences that contribute to how we become the individual that we are. That's the genesis of the whole approach for this project."

Armed with a headset that delivers a voiceover at the right moments, and a wristband that'll allow us to record the decisions we make on the interactive bits of the exhibition, we're ready to go. "We accept all species," says a Nigel Farage-baiting sign on the wall, as we're invited to choose a face for our avatar from that galaxy far, far away. With options including Ewoks, humans, Gungans, Rodians and more, we decide to join Admiral Ackbar's race as a Mon Calamari. We hope it's not a trap...

Now we leave on a mission to find out who our alien will be. Along the way there are video documentary segments explaining the science bits (the animated style is reminiscent of *Jurassic Park*'s Mr DNA), and 10 interactive "stations" that prompt you to search your feelings and think about who you are. And of course, there are plenty of tie-ins with the first

two *Star Wars* trilogies. For example, Anakin and Luke Skywalker clearly have similar genes. They both grew up on Tatooine, and much of their upbringing was away from their biological parents. They're both good pilots and strong with the Force. But at some point their paths diverge to make them very different people. That's *Identities* in a nutshell.

"We started looking at the progression of a person's life," explains Angio-Morneau. "Right from the get-go, we talk about genes and species. Then, the whole progression of the exhibit follows, in a sense, the life of a human. We talk about our origins, and we search for things that influence our youth, like our parents and how they raised us in terms of authority and leniency. At the end of the exhibition, we talk about the choices we make as an adult."

"We really structured the whole exhibition about this quest. *Star Wars* is definitely there, but the whole focus – the way we were writing the text and designing it – became about you, the visitor, in the *Star Wars* world. You are the hero of the exhibition."

## GEEK PARADISE

That perhaps doesn't do the *Star Wars* element justice, however, because even if you find the science isn't your cup of bantha milk, you will be in awe of the museum side of the exhibition. SFX is in heaven, with all the amazing models, costumes, concept art and more on display – now we understand how a connoisseur of classical art feels when staring at a painting at the Louvre. Close up, Han Solo in Carbonite has a remarkable amount of texture. You can see the wires and motors that moved Jabba's eyes (pretty much the only bits of him that have survived from *Return Of The Jedi*). The ship models are just as beautiful close-up as they were on screen – and an ILM information sheet reveals that they really did think about the relative speeds of the ships. (Contrary to popular belief, the Millennium Falcon is not the fastest hunk of junk in the galaxy.)

There's an undeniable sense you're looking at history, and it's no accident – the team behind the exhibition worked closely with Lucasfilm to ensure they had the best possible set of exhibits to show off. "They're all treated like pieces of art," says Sophie Desbiens, communications director at *Identities* creators X3. "When we're in a venue we have specific requirements in terms of humidity and things like that. It has to be totally controlled because these objects were not made to be conserved. What we have left is very precious. A lot of the time people ask what the monetary value of these things is, and the only answer you can give is 'priceless'. They're unique. They're witnesses of a different age in moviemaking. When you look at Chewbacca, every hair was sewn in one at a time. It was a craft."

Nearly as impressive are the facts that accompany the artefacts – stuff that even the most hardcore *Star Wars* fan may not know. Like X-Wing pilots' visors being yellow to hide the fact that the heat on set caused the actors' make-up to run. Or that Harrison Ford provided casts for Han's face and hands when he was frozen in Carbonite, but that the rest of the body belongs to a mystery donor.

"There's an amazing amount of literature that already exists out there," says Angio-Morneau, "and Lucasfilm gave us a ton of books. We had a lot of reading to do. Then we sat down with the [Lucasfilm] curators to ask if there was any unknown fact, or objects that had never been seen before. It was a very thorough validation process of reviewing all the content to make sure all of it was accurate."

We actually hired a *Star Wars* geek for our team for this process. We really wanted to make sure a *Star Wars* fan would learn something new."

And we have. We've also had a chance to ponder our existence, and our Mon Calamari has emerged fully grown. Turns out he spent some of his early life on Hoth (hope his gills didn't freeze up), he's a bounty hunter, and his home planet has been destroyed. We're now faced with one final choice. Will he turn to the Dark Side, or stay in the light? We're not telling – the answers to some questions are between SFX and the Force. ●

*Star Wars Identities: The Exhibition* opens at the O2 on 16 November. Tickets are available at [www.theo2.co.uk](http://www.theo2.co.uk).



From the reveal of Darth Vader in *Return Of The Jedi*.





## PROP STAR

Laela French, director of Lucasfilm's Archive Collection, talks maintaining artefacts from a long time ago...



The Stormtroopers' heads on the right (from the original trilogy) are all subtly different.



Browse a selection of Jedi and Sith cloaks.



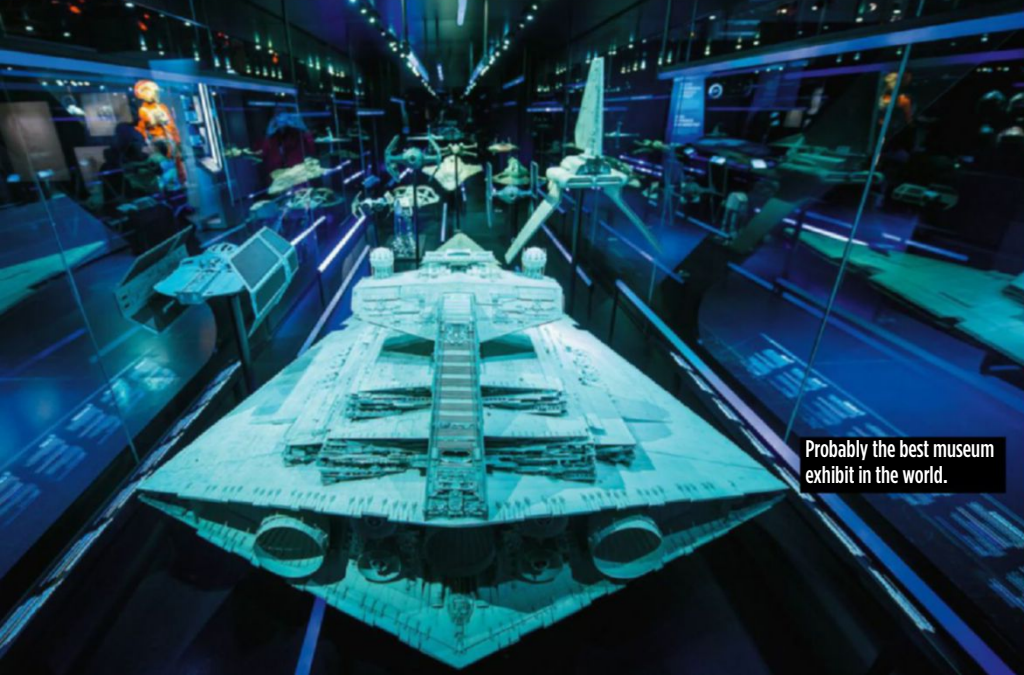
Chewbacca, Han and Leia costumes from *Empire*, plus Lando from *Jedi*.



One of the ten stations on the tour that shape your *Star Wars* character.



Not quite as fast as you think...



Probably the best museum exhibit in the world.

**There are some amazing artefacts on display in *Star Wars Identities*, but how much *Star Wars* stuff do you have that fans haven't seen yet?**

There's things that we'd love to be able to tour around the world, but they're just too fragile to do so. We rely on a smaller subset of artefacts – often props and models – that are more durable or more iconic. Then we have to balance out the needs of the casual museum goer who will be more flexible about what they see, and the dedicated *Star Wars* fans. So we're always trying to add in a few items that maybe are not seen very often. With *Identities* we have a few things that have never been on the road before.

**Some of the stuff in the collection is now 40 years old. What are the challenges in maintaining it all?**

The most challenging things are the latex masks – they get a little bit dry and wrinkly and start to peel – and we've been on a big conservation programme, to have those restored a little bit. The ship models were beautifully done with great detail, but they weren't designed to last for 40 years and tour the world. It's amazing how well they hold up generally, but every now and then we find little joints or bits that fall off that we have to continually repair.

**How involved is the archive with the new *Star Wars* movies?**

Because the new movies are being made under the Disney umbrella, the props are being maintained by them. When we coordinate – like if we've got a [First Order] Stormtrooper – we're really talking to the production team, saying, "What can we borrow to show?" But we work with the new production. Directors, writers, occasionally a set or costume designer, will come to the archive. I feel like it's a pilgrimage that they're obliged to make, to come back to the original collection and really immerse themselves. There's a patina to *Star Wars* that's very unique, and I think when they come in, their eyes light up.



## RUFUS SEWELL

The Brit star explores the dark heart of *The Man In The High Castle*

Words by Richard Edwards // Photography by Maarten de Boer

Rufus Sewell's John Smith may not appear in Philip K Dick's original *The Man In The High Castle* novel, but the ruthless SS Obergruppenführer made a big impression on the first season of Amazon's TV adaptation. While Smith is, on one level, an utterly chilling villain and a thorn in the side of the resistance fighting to free the USA from Nazi rule, the Brit star says he doesn't see the character as evil – just an ordinary guy adapting to his circumstances.

"Until the Nazis dropped the nuclear warhead on Washington in 1945 Smith was a good soldier for the American side," he tells *SFX*. "He never showed any predisposition towards torture. He's not particularly racist. But he ended up in a society where those elements were eked out of him, and the others were suppressed. I believe that he's the dark version of that everyman."

**It feels like Smith is equally divided between advancement for advancement's sake and actual belief in the Nazi ideology.**

❖ I wouldn't say that's true. I would say he believes in protecting his family at all costs. I don't think he has a sense of advancing up the ladder for the sake of advancing up the ladder.

**Do you think he'll thrive in any environment he's thrust into, if the ultimate end is the preservation of his family?**

❖ I don't know. What I try to steer away from is the idea that he is an evil person and there are certain aspects of this personality that will push him towards a certain type of behaviour, irrespective of his environment. I think the key to him – and what's interesting to me about playing him – is that he is a man who has many, many good qualities and many dangerous qualities, like a human being.

**What does he tell us about the rise of Nazism?**

❖ He was a good case study for Nazis. Nazism was started by a small group of really corrupt, really twisted people. And it spread until it took over an entire country. And the entire country was not evil people. They were not all predisposed to evil any more than anyone else. However, it took hold. And not only that, it nearly took hold everywhere else. There are people in America who are very pro-Nazi. So the idea that's interesting for me is that people find a

narrative to convince themselves that what they're doing is good and right.

**On the surface he seems like the typical 1950s nuclear family father...**

❖ That's like the snapshot, and what's interesting for me is going past that snapshot. That's the photo of the "all-American father knows best" kind of thing. But just like in real life, you peel back behind that, and then you actually have a real problem. I was against the idea that in order to make some kind of dramatically ironic point that we were in all other respects a cheesy American family. For me, in all other respects, we were a real family. That's where it becomes interesting, once you get past that.

**What steps did you go through to build the character?**

❖ I tried to put myself in the mind-set, not of a Nazi, but of a human being. I would notice, for example, that day players would come in to play American Nazis, and they would [does German accent] automatically start speaking like this. Their body language would automatically want to pull on their fingers, one glove at a time. A lot of these signifiers of Germanic evil would automatically happen to the performance. And we all do that with our thinking – if you want your granny to think you're a good actor, you act like a Nazi. I wanted whoever that granny figure was to think I'd got it wrong.

**What did you read for research?**

❖ As soon as I found out my character wasn't in *The Man In The High Castle*, I thought, "I won't read that yet." I read, first of all, *The Rise And Fall Of The Third Reich*, which was the history – very famous history – of how it happened. And I discovered a lot of very interesting things. Hitler said something very, very terrifying about people who questioned the validity of Nazism. He said, "Don't worry about these people. I have their sons, I have their daughters, I have their sisters, I have their mothers, I have their wives." That is very, very chilling. You think you're a lone person, but you lose everything you have.

**What interests you in a character when you're choosing a role?**

❖ I don't know. It varies. To be perfectly honest, living in the real world, sometimes I hold out for the greatest part in the world – and then you can be unemployed for a really, really long time. So for me, it just has to excite me. ●

*The Man In The High Castle returns to Amazon Prime on 16 December.*

### Biodata

#### Occupation

→ Actor

#### Born

→ 29 October 1967

#### From

→ Twickenham, England

#### Greatest Hits

→ *Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter*, *Parade's End*, *Eleventh Hour*, *The Legend Of Zorro*, *A Knight's Tale*, *Dark City*

#### Random Fact

→ Sewell's father William was an animator who worked on the "Lucy In The Sky With Diamonds" sequence in the Beatles' *Yellow Submarine* movie.



“HE’S THE  
DARK VERSION  
OF THE  
EVERYMAN”







# DREAM COUNTRY

From *Preacher* to *Lucifer*, TV is plundering the back pages of **VERTIGO**. Abigail Chandler explores the history of DC Comics' edgy, provocative imprint

**W**hen DC Comics launched their Vertigo imprint in 1993, they wanted a place where they could develop some of their lesser-known characters and give creators a chance to tell controversial and groundbreaking new stories. Comics like *Sandman* and *Hellblazer* were doing well for them and they wanted to give them a home of their own.

Fast-forward 23 years and Vertigo screen adaptations are everywhere you look. Whether they bombed, like *Constantine*, progressed nicely like *Lucifer* and *iZombie* or were the hottest new show of the summer (hello, *Preacher*), the TV industry finally seemed to cotton on to what the comics industry figured out over two decades ago – controversial, provocative material is always the most interesting.

Nineties Vertigo marked a creative period that remains incredibly impressive to this day. We got *Sandman*, *Swamp Thing*, *Preacher*, *Hellblazer*, *Transmetropolitan*, *100 Bullets*, *The Invisibles* and more that decade, with titles like *Lucifer*, *Fables* and *Y: The Last Man* following in the early '00s.

Aside from poorly-received film adaptations of *V For Vendetta* and *Hellblazer* (as Keanu Reeves vehicle *Constantine*) and ongoing failed attempts to adapt *Sandman* for the big screen, the film and TV industry has been slow to take advantage of Vertigo's treasure trove of original stories. But with the success of *Preacher*, that's likely to change now.

## THINK DIFFERENT

Right from the beginning, Vertigo was determined to do things differently. "I'm not a comic book fan," admits Vertigo founder and former executive editor Karen Berger. "I think I bring a different perspective to the work that I've done because I bring things from →





other areas of interest, objectivity, no sort of fan attachments, and ultimately just a desire to make cool, irreverent material in comic book form, and to really break the boundaries. That was the mission of Vertigo... to have a point of view that really went against the grain of what was out there at the time."

That different approach was what attracted writer Mike Carey to Vertigo, long before he wrote *Lucifer*, *Hellblazer* and *The Unwritten* for the imprint. "I think there was a point at which American comics – and I'm thinking right up to the late '70s and very early '80s – when American comics had gone into kind of a rut because they were being edited and written by people who had respect for the tradition, but they only knew one way to do it, they only knew one way to tell a story," Carey says. "And you suddenly get these British writers coming in, the first generation of Brits writing for the American market – and I'm thinking Alan Moore, Neil Gaiman, Grant Morrison – who basically just threw all the rules out the window and started doing something completely revolutionary."

So how exactly did a creator-owned line of violent, smart, epic and often explicit comics come out of the Comics Code-obeying DC of

“They said  
‘Would you like  
to have your  
own imprint?’  
Well yeah...”

the early '90s? "I had been at DC for 10 years before Vertigo," Berger tells *SFX*. "I had already established the core books that became the seminal books of Vertigo, the proto Vertigo books like *Sandman*, *Hellblazer*, *Swamp Thing*, *Shade The Changing Man*, *Doom Patrol*... DC were calling them the Berger Books, they knew that there was something different and edgier going on in those titles and they had a great response. I was on maternity leave – it was in '91 when my first son was born – and I got a call from Jenette Kahn and Paul Levitz and Dick

Giordano, who were running the company, and they said, 'We really would love for you to do more with this cool stuff that you're doing. We're getting such a good response, we see a larger audience for this', and they said, 'Would you like to have your own imprint?' I'm like, well yeah..." Berger laughs at the memory.

Berger was determined "not to be beholden to a lot of the things that were kind of the rules of superhero comics and try and really look outwards and look at the storytelling in perhaps more of a European way, in a more independent way, a more underground way." That was certainly something Carey responded to as a reader. "It was literally a different template for long-form storytelling that suddenly made all kinds of things possible," he remembers.

The remarkable thing about the Vertigo books is that something like *Preacher* feels just as shocking and revolutionary today as it did 20 years ago. "We were kind of ahead of the curve a little bit, I think," Berger says. "All stuff that goes against the grain tends to happen on the fringes of what's going on in the mainstream, and comics, just by its very nature, is a fringe medium, and what we were doing with Vertigo was even on the fringe of superheroes."

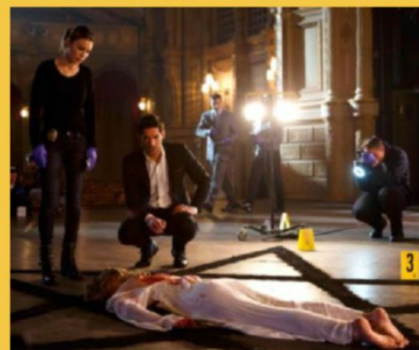
## THE DEVIL'S WORK

—The delicate art of adaptation—

The *Lucifer* TV show has been criticised for having only the bare minimum in common with the comic book of the same name, but Mike Carey, writer of the *Lucifer* comic, knows better than most that adaptation means reinvention. He confesses that, while he's seen and enjoyed some episodes of *Lucifer*, he's "not following it religiously. No pun intended."

Carey, of course, was himself adapting *Lucifer* from Neil Gaiman's *Sandman*, where the character had first been introduced. On

the subject of adaptation, Carey says: "I've done it enough times to know now that you can't translate something straight from one medium to another, you have to figure out what works in the new medium and play to that... I don't resent the fact that the show's gone in a different direction from the comic. I think it had to. And ultimately I think that *Lucifer* the comic went in a somewhat different direction to *Sandman*, although it was always a joy to write a continuation of some of those stories. I still think that



*Sandman* is one of the masterpieces of the whole comic book medium."



# V FOR VERTIGO

## ← What makes a → “Vertigo comic”?

Controversy and experimentation wasn't the be-all and end-all of Vertigo under Karen Berger. The books all shared similar themes, including what Berger refers to as the “anarchic, rebellious, rage-against-the-machine or whatever you want to call that almost revolutionary, punk aspect. I think it was a big part of what was so attractive about those series. It just speaks to a lot of people at a certain age, who want to defy the system and question the world that we live in and explore the darker side and follow characters who have ambiguous moralities.

“That's probably the key thing that differentiates a Vertigo protagonist from a superhero protagonist – they're complicated. They're not black and white. You don't necessarily always agree with what they're doing.”



Carey thinks the reason comics can afford to be a little more experimental than TV is that they can literally afford it – financially speaking. “It costs hundreds of millions of dollars to make a tentpole movie, or to make a TV series, so the people who do those things, who bankroll those things are understandably averse to risk. There's very little risk in comics. You can do what you like really, the budgets are unlimited, the ceiling is very high.”

Berger was never precious over the idea of what American comics should be, and that allowed Vertigo to really break free of convention. “You look at so much stuff that's on TV, and even in comics. I mean, when you do stuff that's licensed or company characters or franchises that go on so long, you just get really tired of it as a reader, as a viewer. And what we did at Vertigo was always ask, ‘What's the next new thing out there and what can we do to really challenge what you expect of a comic book?’”

In 2010 DC Comics decided to move all of the Vertigo characters who originated in the DC universe back into the main DCU – including John Constantine, Swamp Thing and Shade, the Changing Man. Karen Berger left Vertigo in 2013, and DC has been making a

concerted effort ever since to claw back some of the ground the imprint lost to other creator-owned publishers, especially Image Comics. These days it boasts a strong slate including *American Vampire*, *Clean Room*, *Unfollow* and *The Sheriff Of Babylon*.

### ANARCHY IN THE DC

The anarchic days of Vertigo's immoral protagonists and rejection of authority might be over, but those themes are clearly still resonating with a modern audience, otherwise why would so many screen adaptations have come out at once?

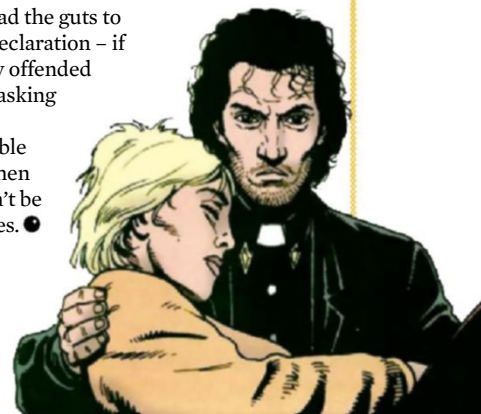
“I think there's a certain type of person who always responds to not being complacent and being excited about something new, and challenging the status quo and challenging the system,” Berger says. “I think a lot of it is questioning, not taking things as accepted or for granted. I think it's a really positive way to look at the world, to question it. I can definitely see the millennial attraction.”

Despite the often controversial nature of the Vertigo titles, Berger was given almost complete free rein by DC. “I got a lot of support and that's what was so great about working at DC at the

time – there was such a great trust and creativity and realising that there are risks you have to take if you want to run a creative company, and really give writers and artists the opportunity to push comics into a different zone.”

While TV is catching up with Vertigo's boldness, it's still not quite there. The *Constantine* TV show was criticised by viewers for sanitising its occultist hero in order to make him palatable enough for network TV, and the *Preacher* TV show is yet to match the outrageously blasphemous realms of the comic book. “It's fiction,” Berger stresses when *SFX* asks her about the religious controversy over *Preacher*. “I think that's the whole thing that people forget about. This is not real. And you're always going to find someone who's offended by stuff, but if you live that way you shouldn't be in a creative medium.”

Vertigo had the guts to make that declaration – if you're easily offended or afraid of asking some big, uncomfortable questions, then you shouldn't be telling stories. ●

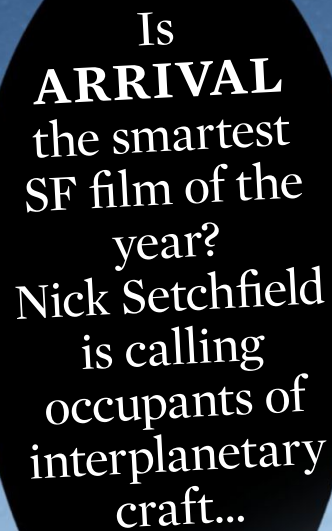




ARRIVAL







Is  
**ARRIVAL**  
the smartest  
SF film of the  
year?  
Nick Setchfield  
is calling  
occupants of  
interplanetary  
craft...

# C O N T A C T H I G H

**P**“People are really hungry for intelligent sci-fi,” says Dan Levine, producer of first contact tale *Arrival*. “We’ve had *Interstellar*, *Gravity*, *The Martian*. It seems every year there is that one film that really pushes the boundaries. And as huge fans of sci-fi we’re just thrilled to be in that conversation.”

Conversation? It’s an illuminating choice of word. *Arrival* is all about conversation: language, communication, meaning. And that’s a rare thing, given first dates between mankind and extra-terrestrials rarely end well on the big screen. While other alien encounter movies revel in death ray diplomacy and tactical nuclear trash talk, leaping to DEFCON 1 at the

speed of a Roland Emmerich adrenaline surge, *Arrival* asks “Why can’t we just put our action sequences aside and listen to one another?”

It’s an uncompromisingly smart film, inspired by an equally cerebral short story – Ted Chiang’s 1998 tale “Story Of Your Life”, which won both a Nebula and a Theodore Sturgeon award.

“We had never read a story like it,” says Levine, who discovered Chiang’s tale in a collection of his short fiction. “On the surface it had a really strong sci-fi concept – what would happen if aliens came to the Earth? How would the Earth react? – but it treated it in a documentary style way. At its core it had an incredibly moving story of a mother and her →



daughter. It was just so rare to see such a high concept grounded with such emotion.”

It's also a story concerned with linguistic relativity and cognitive determinism – concepts rarely served as a dip option with your Cineworld nachos. The filmmakers knew they needed to transform Chiang's brainy parable into something not just accessible but cinematic, too. The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis isn't exactly box office.

“It was an incredible challenge,” says Levine, part of the production company behind recent Netflix phenomenon *Stranger Things*. “I have to give so much credit to our screenwriter, Eric Heisserer, who worked with us tirelessly, draft after draft after draft, trying to open up the story. We had that really strong emotional core but there wasn't much else to the story. We had to build up around that, and it took multiple drafts to get it right.”

## FIRST CONTACT

Brought to the screen by Denis Villeneuve (*Sicario*, *Prisoners*, next year's *Blade Runner 2049*), *Arrival* opens with a dozen alien craft touching down around the globe. They perch on the horizon like giant, cloud-wreathed eggs, ominous and unknowable. Fighter jets scramble, YouTube melts and the US government throws in a squad of boffins at the Montana landing site. Included in the team is Amy Adams as expert linguist Louise Banks. Haunted by memories of her late daughter, she must attempt to communicate with the otherworldly guests while the world quivers on the blade-edge of war.

As fellow producer Aaron Ryder tells *SFX*, Villeneuve's skill-set as a director was crucial to the project.

“One of the things that was important in the short story was its sense of realism. It doesn't rely on too many movie tropes. And Denis didn't really see this as an alien invasion movie – more an alien arrival movie. What would be the protocols that were in place? How would they be implemented? How would people react? What would the government be doing? What would the news organisations be saying? That was the tone and the texture, which is established right upfront.

“And that's something Denis has at the forefront of his decisions,” Ryder continues. “When people watch the movie one of the things they respond to is that it feels so real and so tense, and that's what Denis does very, very well. He amplifies that tension better than just about any working director out there.”

“The thing we always marvelled about with Denis is that he's the kind of director that can put you on the edge of your seat but can also bring tears to your eyes,” adds Levine. “You just don't see that in movies these days. It's usually one or the other.”

“I think that the chaos the film shows is accurate”



Forest Whitaker, Amy Adams and Jeremy Renner attempt to understand the aliens.

Just as exceptionally, *Arrival* engages in a slow dance with the unknown. It's a film that thrums with a steadily building sense of awe, pacing its reveals so that the audience experiences first contact alongside the film's protagonists. You won't see its alien visitors blown in the trailers or splurged in the marketing. “Everyone got it,” says Ryder. “Everyone wanted a sense of wonder preserved.”

Villeneuve hired artist Carlos Huante to help conceptualise the creatures' appearance. Inspired by everything from whales to spiders,

octopuses to elephants, he sought an alien visual that had never been seen on the screen.

“You have to keep in mind that we're working in a pretty well-worn genre,” admits Ryder. “And if you're creating spaceships and aliens you really don't want to have anything be familiar. We spent a fair bit of time discussing what these aliens and these ships would ultimately look like.”

“The short story had a description of the aliens that we departed from,” Levine tells *SFX*. “Denis and Carlos deserve all the credit. They had to create a CG creation that our cast could





Amy Adams plays a linguist haunted by the death of her daughter.

act with, could react to. It's a real character in the movie and to give a sense of soul and weight and presence to it was such an incredible win for us. We'd seen so many great films where when you finally get to see the alien it's a disappointment. We really wanted to avoid that."

## FACING THE UNKNOWN

Amy Adams is the beating heart of *Arrival*, as Ryder acknowledges. "One of the appeals of the short story and what we loved about the script – and why I think we got someone of Amy's calibre – is that it's rare to see such a strong female lead in a story like this. Just to see that point of view amidst all the noise and chaos of what's going on in the world... She has the ability and strength to stay calm and focused, to communicate with the aliens. And she has such an incredibly expressive face. That was one of the challenges – having an actress you could see relating to an alien that obviously wasn't really there when we were shooting. Every day on set we were thankful that she was in the film."

Paired with Adams is Jeremy Renner as theoretical physicist Ian Donnelly. Given Renner's best known for such bicep-flexing fare as the *Bourne*, *Mission: Impossible* and *Avengers* franchises, did it feel like counter-intuitive casting?

"Yes and no," says Levine. "He can't look like a musclebound action star and still be believable as a physicist. At the same time he has to have a physicality to him and be a movie star. This movie's going to remind people what an incredibly strong dramatic actor Jeremy is. His performance sneaks up on you. He's a quiet presence in the movie but he gains such emotional velocity throughout the story that it just hits you so hard in the end."

Levine and Ryder cite Spielberg's *Close Encounters Of The Third Kind* as a touchstone inspiration. But that was 1977 – this is 2016 and hyper-caf-finated, pixel-drenched armageddon is the default setting of science fiction cinema. How did such a fiercely thoughtful film as *Arrival* ever make it to the screen intact? Surely there was pressure to make it more multiplex-palatable, to dial down the linguistic theory and crank up the tracer fire?

"It was a long process to get this film made," Levine confesses. "Our goal every step of the way was to protect Denis and this beautiful movie. And yes, there were definitely times when we expected – and got – that pressure. But the beauty of the film won out over any conversations like, 'Well, we don't have a big alien attack action sequence,' or 'It's too challenging for audiences.' I think that after the summer audiences are thirsting for something challenging."

"And let's be honest," says Ryder, "when it comes to movies like this one, where it's intellectually challenging to some degree, there's always going to be a push and pull between the filmmakers and the people that have to get this movie out there to the masses. And that push and pull usually results in a better film, because you have something that is equally balanced – commercially minded and at the same time elegant and sophisticated."

And is this how a real life first contact would play out?

"I often think about this," laughs Ryder.

"Aaron is actually currently living in a bunker underneath his house, where he spends most of his time in fear..."

"Some call it crazy. Others call it prepared!"

Ryder considers the question more seriously. "I think that the chaos the film shows is accurate. People would panic. People wouldn't go to work. They'd be glued to their TVs. What we really tried to accomplish with this film is ask, 'Why are they here?' Every movie skips over that and goes straight to them wanting to destroy us. That was the part of the movie we wanted to live in. What is that moment? Who would talk to them? How would we find out what they want?" ●

*Arrival opens on 11 November.*

# TALK TALK

*Arrival* recruited linguistics expert Professor Jessica Coon of Canada's McGill University

## Why did the production need a linguist?

I was asked to comment on the script and work with the set crew. They brought me to the military tent set and said, "Imagine you've just been helicoptered here and you have a team of 50 military cryptographers. Your job is to decipher this language. What do you write on the whiteboard?"

## If aliens really did arrive, how would we even start deciphering their language?

When looking at a language that hasn't been studied or described, a field linguist looks for patterns.

## And there's every chance it won't be spoken?

Right. Spoken language is constrained temporally – when you speak you can only produce so many things at a time. But the written language of the Heptapods uses circular logograms that aren't constrained temporally in the same way.

## Should we forget everything we know about human language?

That's exactly Louise's task when she's trying to convince the General that he can't start asking very complicated questions – they have to start with something more basic. Does the concept of a question even apply to alien languages? When we talk about universal grammar it's the genetic endowment that allows us to acquire language. There's no reason to expect aliens would have the same system – in fact it would be very surprising if they did.

Drew Turney



© OWEN EGAN



# FLYING HIGHER

## SUPERGIRL'S SECOND YEAR SENDS HER SOARING THROUGH THE DC MULTIVERSE. JOSEPH McCABE HITCHES A RIDE

**I**t's never been easy for Supergirl. Decades of living in her famous cousin's shadow once saw the Maid of Might's comic book career shuffle through numerous short-lived titles. And while Superman became a box-office phenomenon in the '70s and '80s, Kara Zor-El weathered a 1984 movie misfire. Even more insulting, for the last 30 years, she's been most closely identified with a story – DC Comics' *Crisis On Infinite Earths* – that killed her off in order to make her cousin once more Krypton's sole survivor.

But her fortunes changed with the bright, bold bolt of red-and-blue-coloured hope that arrived last year in Kara's first-ever TV show. Executive produced by Greg Berlanti – of *Arrow*, *Flash* and *Legends Of Tomorrow* fame – *Supergirl*'s first season culminated with Kara

(played by Melissa Benoist) saving her home town of National City from a Kryptonian invasion force, and forging her own identity in her adoptive world.

Now in its second season, *Supergirl*, like the Maid of Might herself, has received a new lease of life. Its production has now left Warner Brothers Studios in Los Angeles, and is produced in Vancouver alongside Berlanti's other shows for America's CW network – as part of the most ambitious, fully integrated genre universe continuity ever brought to television. Which means fans can now look forward to an epic crossover event this year, including four DC TV series.

"We're doing a massive crossover between all four," says Berlanti's right-hand woman, producer Sarah Schechter. "It's gonna be just an

incredible week. It's a whole logistical nightmare that's made a little easier by Melissa being up in Vancouver. But part of the fun is we love all these characters and hopefully our fans love all these characters, so to be able to mix and match and see different people interacting and the relationships between them... It's just endlessly fun. It's like being a little kid when you have your action figures. You'd have your Superman playing with your GI Joe! It's fun for the writers and it's fun for the actors. It helps foster real community between all of these shows, which is what we want."

In its second year, *Supergirl*'s spirit of community has even extended to Superman himself: in the form of actor Tyler Hoechlin, who joins his cousin in National City for the season's kick-off storyline. ➔









## CAPE OF GOOD HOPE

**Melissa Benoist** suits up for action...

💎 **Supergirl's first season was about Kara finding herself. What will her journey involve this year?**

Season one was kind of her coming out to party, and her figuring out how she really fit into the world. She built a solid base for herself. But now it's time to really mature, as a woman and as a hero; in her career, in her love life, and as a superhero. Learning how to juggle it all and find balance.

**What can you tell us about the introduction of Kara's cousin Superman?**

💎 I think the writers have handled it beautifully. Regardless of their sexes, they're family, and that's what's important – how they teach one another and the love between them. They're two surviving members of a dying race. That is beautiful to me.

**What's it like inspiring girls all over the world though Kara?**

💎 It think it's essential right now, and not just because she's a woman. But because she stands for so much good. I think we really need that in the world right now. It's a scary place. For boys and girls, I hope that she inspires hope and bravery and the will to never give up.

**Do you think Supergirl should remain a bright show or should it become darker?**

💎 I think innately she has a dark story, and a really traumatic past. So there are elements of that inside of her. But what I think is beautiful is the way she overcomes and the way she always finds the silver lining.

"It was really exciting for us to build who Supergirl was," Schecter says of *Supergirl's* first season, "what she was capable of, and her strengths and the depth of her as a character. In season one we were really able to do that. But while there's a lot of comedy, action and drama, it's really a story about families. It's about the family that you have and the family that you choose. And Clark is an important part of Kara. He's the only living part of Kara's family. It is her show, and I think you'll feel that in these episodes – she's equal to him in every way. But [he's] a way to learn more about Kara, really. To see more of her family. In the way that sometimes you can see your family and see similar ties and connections. But part of what separates them is that she spent her youth on Krypton, and then she lost everything. He was a baby, so he doesn't remember it and she does. That's a gift to both of them in different ways and a tragedy to both of them."

Some of year two's other new characters will also resonate with longtime superhero fans, including the President of the United States – played by TV's Wonder Woman herself, Lynda Carter.

"We had [invited] her last year," says Berlanti of the iconic actress. "We had a President written into the finale last year, and she wasn't available. So we took the President out of the finale and put her into episode three this year. She'll be in multiple episodes. She's recurring. There are some fun twists with the character too that I think people are going to be really excited by."

"We give her a lot of things to do," adds Schecter. "Hopefully we'll be accurate

**"It was exciting for us to build who Supergirl was"**

prognosticators of November's election with our real-life Supergirl, Hillary [Clinton]... Then we've got some other great cast joining us. Ian Gomez is coming in and is going to be playing Kara's direct boss. He's sort of doing a Lou Grant character. It's just going to be a lot of fun."

Addressing last season's cliffhanger ending, in which a mysterious Kryptonian pod crash-landed in National City, Schecter says, "The big reveal is who's in the pod. That's gonna be a big part of season two. It's not just who's in the pod, but what are the motives of the person in the pod – are they good or bad? Are they telling the truth? There's gonna be a lot of fun to play there."

## COMING TOGETHER

Other new characters this year include Metallo, Lex Luthor's sister Lena, and the introduction of Project Cadmus and Guardian. But fans are already beside themselves with anticipation for the four-part crossover involving the entire DC TV Multiverse, which will be followed in the spring by a musical crossover.

"We just started working on it last week," says Berlanti of the four-parter. "I've mentioned that it will be one kind of unified threat. We haven't done a global threat yet on the show."

That's something that would be resolved in the crossover. A piece of the story will start in *Supergirl*. There will be connective tissue to *Supergirl*. If you're watching it as a beginning, middle and end, production-wise the way that we've kind of imagined it, the storyline starts in *The Flash*, but it will be helpful if you've watched *Supergirl*







They must be remembering '70s Wonder Woman.



Glasses can be so handy!

the night before... We have a means of how we're gonna deal with her entering the crossovers. She'll be coming to 'our universe', as it were, the Universe Prime that we all share. But connecting those two is not something we've talked about, to be honest."

SFX asks Berlanti if a *Crisis On Infinite Earths* adaptation could one day occur, permanently merging *Supergirl's* universe with the parallel universe of *Flash*, *Arrow* and *Legends*...

"Sure, absolutely. Part of why [DC] was doing that at the time is, I think, to clarify a lot of things. Hopefully we don't get to a point where everyone's so confused that we have to do that. But yeah, absolutely. It's not something we haven't talked about, it's just something that's not a priority... To be honest, it's the same thing we encountered when we initially did *Supergirl* – with *Supergirl* comes Superman, and none of the characters on our shows in the universe we've created live in a world where they're talking about Superman. I think we would deal with that if we ever dealt with how he integrated too, because it's a significant thing."

In the meantime, fans can, according to Schecter, expect a more "comic booky" *Supergirl* than they saw in the show's first season, which melded superheroics with soap-opera romance. The change in tone is also due to the show's new home.

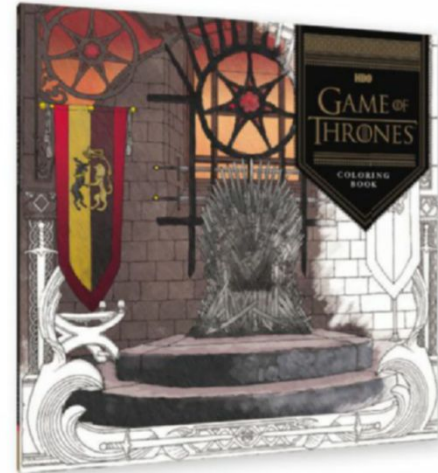
"The people at The CW have been making superhero shows for years," says Schecter. "*Arrow's* going into its fifth season. So we just have a shorthand with them. If you say 'metahuman', they know what that means right away. So it will allow us to be all of who we are."

*Supergirl* is on Sky 1 in the UK and The CW in the US.



An accurate prediction of the future....?

## HBO'S *GAME OF THRONES*® COLORING BOOK IS OUT NOW!



Characters and scenes include: Jon Snow with his direwolf Ghost, Castle Black, Daenerys with the Unsullied, Arya with her sword Needle, Winterfell, King's Landing and more

Get your copy at Waterstones, Foyles, WHSmith and all good bookstores  
Find out more at [www.abramsandchronicle.co.uk](http://www.abramsandchronicle.co.uk)

abrams&chronicle books

HBO Official HBO Licensed Product © 2016 Home Box Office, Inc. All Rights Reserved.  
HBO and related trademarks are the property of Home Box Office, Inc.



Recycle your magazine and seven days later  
it could come back as your newspaper.

[www.recyclenow.com](http://www.recyclenow.com)

 **recycle**

The possibilities are endless.



Brought



To Book

# KEN LIU

The Chinese-born American author on the ideas behind silkpunk...

Words by Jonathan Wright // Photography by Lisa Tang Liu

**T**he term Ken Liu applies to his own fiction is “silkpunk”. It’s a way, he says, to describe a take on epic fantasy that “has a new aesthetic”, one “based on both technology and magic” and rooted in “the classic antiquity of East Asia”, the deep history of countries such as China, Japan and South Korea.

“The technology grammar is based on traditional East Asian engineering practice,” he tells *SFX* during a whistle stop tour of the UK, “which is very flexible, very organic and based on bio-mimicry, so you’ve got these airships that pulsate, like jellyfish, and you’ve got soaring battle kites, like eagles, and you’ve got these underwater boats that flex and swim like whales.”

It’s an aesthetic Liu brings to bear in his new novel, *The Wall Of Storms*, the second part of his *Dandelion Dynasty* trilogy. It’s an ambitious, gnarly and, yes, epic fantasy where, for once, comparisons with *Game Of Thrones* seem entirely apposite, and which is built around a threat to the blood-spattered Dandelion Throne of the books’ overarching title. “I think of the second book [in a fantasy sequence] as the most interesting because that’s where all the transformation happens,” says Liu.

It’s a transformation that’s not just driven by warriors and political power brokers. In part, he says, the books are an act of homage to “the great engineer”, a recurring character in East Asian historical romances. “They serve the same role as wizards in the western epic, except that instead of doing magical things they do engineering things,” he says.

Yet for all the *Dandelion Dynasty* novels are deeply rooted in East Asian culture, we shouldn’t see the books as somehow “fantasy China” stories. Sure, they’re based in great part on “foundational myths from Chinese history”, but Liu also draws on Asian historical romances and western epics such as *The Iliad*, *Beowulf* and *Paradise Lost*.

## OLD WAYS, NEW WAYS

In this context, the punk suffix is more than a marketing affectation. When *SFX* mentions Michael Moorcock’s proto-steampunk work in the 1970s, there’s an instant flash of recognition. “It’s being in *resistance* to multiple traditions as well as being in conversation with those traditions,” says Liu.

For another take on what Liu’s getting at, think, of all people, of one of his key influences, the English poet John Milton (1608-74). In some ways, says Liu, Milton’s epic poem of the Fall of Man, *Paradise Lost*, can be read as “angelpunk” for the way it transposes “the tropes and frameworks and techniques of classical epics” into English.

“He was standing between traditions, between cultures, between narrative techniques, he was trying to construct this new thing in what was still a very raw language, vernacular English,” says Liu, “and trying to make it bear the weight of something that was so important to him, this Christian myth.”

This was in part, says Liu, an act of translation on Milton’s part – and it’s a part of the conversation we arrive at via Liu’s own work as a translator. In 2015, Chinese writer Cixin Liu’s *The Three-Body Problem* took the Hugo Award for best novel. Ken Liu was the novel’s translator. It’s a line of work, he says, that he fell into by accident. After reading a story in English by Chinese author Chen Qiufan, *The Fish Of Lijian*, that didn’t capture its creator’s “distinctive and strong voice”, he decided he could do better himself.

## LOST IN TRANSLATION

So would Ken Liu, born in China but raised in the US from the age of 11, be interested in translating his own books into Chinese? Not for a moment. “To write well in vernacular Chinese now, one must have been absorbed in that culture,” he says. It would, he adds, “feel very awkward and very strange” to translate his own work.

Instead, his next translation project is *Invisible Planets*, an anthology of contemporary Chinese science fiction. “This is the first time of which I’m aware that a commercial anthology of Chinese SF has been put out in the Anglophone world,” he says. As to how readers will approach the stories, while he emphasises that there’s no “right” or “wrong” way to read a book, he warns against looking for easy generalisations about what makes an SF story distinctly Chinese.

That’s perhaps to be expected. Liu himself, after all, is an émigré who rejects what he calls “the hyphenated identity” of Chinese-American in favour of defining himself as an American author who’s also a member of the Chinese diaspora. He’s interested, he says, in the “cultural negotiations” this involves, negotiations that began when he was still a child.

“[Moving to the US] was a great way to learn about who you are,” he says. “It’s only when your identity is challenged that you try to figure out what it is, and it’s a great way for you to figure out in what ways who you are really is a matter of fluidity, of negotiation, of trying to resist labels others put on you – and trying to determine for yourself what these terms mean.” ●

*The Wall Of Storms* and *Invisible Planets* are out now.

## Biodata

### Occupation

→ Novelist

### Born

→ 1976

### From

→ Lanzhou, China

### Greatest Hits

→ Liu’s short stories have won multiple awards, including two Hugos. His *The Grace Of Kings* won the Locus Best First Novel Award in 2016.

### Random Fact

→ Liu has worked as a programmer and as a lawyer. “The two professions are surprisingly similar,” he’s noted. “In both, one extra level of indirection solves most problems.”





“I THINK OF  
THE SECOND  
BOOK IN A  
FANTASY  
SEQUENCE AS  
THE MOST  
INTERESTING”



A man with dark hair, wearing a blue suit jacket over a white shirt, is seated in a black office chair. He is looking down and to his right with a serious expression. The background is a plain, light blue wall. Overlaid on the image is large, bold text. The word 'BAD' is in red and 'COMPANY' is in pink, both in a sans-serif font. The text is positioned across the middle of the image, partially obscuring the man's face and the chair.

# BAD COMPANY



\$

The corporations won.  
The people lost.  
Bryan Cairns is insider trading  
on **INCORPORATED**, TV's  
slick new near-future thriller

\$

B

**leak futures are a science fiction**

staple. Zombie apocalypses, viral outbreaks and global disasters frequently serve as backdrops to put mankind under the microscope. Syfy's

*Incorporated*, from executive producers Ben Affleck and Matt Damon, taps into that dystopian vein. The 13-episode series brings the intrigue of big business to what showrunner Ted Humphrey calls "a very grounded future".

"I use that term carefully," Humphrey tells *SFX*. "We joke that it means no laser beams or flying cars. All the technology in the show is believably the next generation of things that either exist today or are on the drawing board. The idea of the show is that climate change has wreaked havoc on the environment. Governments have bankrupted themselves to a certain extent, while fighting the effects of that. In their stead, corporations have become the de facto power in the world. Big corporations have sovereign powers. They have their own military apparatus and their own territory. When you work for a big corporation, you are subject to their laws and subject to being tortured and even put to death for breaking those laws.

"By the same token, you are protected," Humphrey continues. "We wanted to posit, 'What does the future look like when cities in the United States begin to resemble what we already see in cities in other parts of the world?' That means well-to-do people, people who work for big companies and have money, live in beautiful communities and nice homes. Those communities are gated and literally patrolled by armed guards. They drive on protected highways to beautiful skyscrapers and everybody else lives in random towns."

*Incorporated* follows Ben Larson (Sean Teale), a smart, charismatic up-and-comer at the Spiga Corporation, an Agri-Tech giant. He's married to Laura (Allison Miller), the daughter of powerful corporate executive Elizabeth (Julia Ormond). In the beginning, Ben appears to be on top of the world – an illusion destined to come crashing down. Mr. Wonderful, it turns out, isn't all he's cracked up to be.

"Ben is somebody who used his technological skills to create an identity for himself, which has enabled him to infiltrate the world of the corporations in order to find the woman he loves," Humphrey explains. "She's been forced to sell herself into servitude to the corporation. That's the mission he's on, but the interesting thing we love is that his deception is so complete. He's been at it for several years now. He's grown quite comfortable in his life →



and probably began to think he might never find this person. The major incident in the pilot is he thinks that he's found her and that throws a monkey wrench into his life."

Ben strategises and manipulates to find his missing love. In the pilot, he frames co-worker Chad (David Hewlett) for stealing company intel. As a result, Ben is promoted and assumes Chad's position where classified information is more accessible. The move could also lead to an interrogation or even Chad's demise.

"He does some fairly ruthless things and continues to do so," Humphrey confirms. "Does that make Ben a classic antihero? I suppose it does. The question of the show is very much, 'How far is too far in pursuit of a good and noble goal?' So, how far will he go? And not only what damage will he inflict on others, but what damage will he do to himself? Everything he does takes a toll on him."

## DIFFERENT WORLDS

It's a breezy September morning when *SFX* visits the *Incorporated* set in Toronto. A tour of Cinespace Studios quickly reveals the inequality of this world. The corporate-controlled areas, where the rich thrive, are referred to as Green Zones. One soundstage representing that lifestyle features Ben's sleek home, while Spiga's modern offices take over another. A lone chair sits in the middle of the company's forbidding Quiet Room, where Julian (Dennis Haysbert) relies on torturous techniques to interrogate his guests.

Across the road, production has transformed an outside lot into the Red Zone. The people who are forced to fend for themselves reside in these slums. Rundown stores line the street and a mounted sign advertises "Double Whammy Burger – Now with 10% real beef". A bar hides a fighting cage for candidates who want to duke it out in the ring for cash. It all feels very gritty and authentic.

Ben (Sean Teale) is something of an antihero. With a very smart office.



"It takes place in a future universe, but it's about the world we live in"

"We were obviously influenced by a lot of fiction throughout the years, everything from 1984 to things like *Children Of Men* and *Gattaca*," Humphrey tells *SFX*. "I like to think we've come up with a unique look of our own, though. We're also influenced by an enormous amount of non-fiction research that we've done. [Creator] Alex Pastor has read everything there is on what direction the world is heading. We're working with some research experts from a variety of places including the UN.

Obviously, it's a fictional world, and it's a speculative world. We wanted it to feel as real as possible, like this is hopefully not the future we're headed for, but an extremely possible one."

At the moment, all the action is taking place in Spiga's White Room. Forensic techs – equipped with hand-held, iPhone-sized scanners – descend on a stripped-out car to retrieve fingerprints or DNA from the bloody interior. Julian, Spiga's head of security for the US branch, surveys the proceedings as a gurney

# CORPORATE AFFAIRS

Five of sci-fi's shadiest businesses



## TYRELL CORPORATION

BLADE RUNNER

In the year 2019, these guys build and sell lifelike android replicants to perform labour. While they're not necessarily evil, there's no denying that serious glitches exist in their product line...



## THE UMBRELLA CORPORATION

RESIDENT EVIL

This pharmaceutical conglomerate tinkered with genetic engineering and biological weaponry. The end result: a zombie apocalypse that wiped out mankind. Can we sue?



## ROXXON ENERGY CORPORATION

MARVEL UNIVERSE

This influential energy company frequently backs shady deals and clients in its quest for political and economic dominance. Notorious for its aversion to moral principles.



## WEYLAND-YUTANI CORPORATION

ALIEN

Behind the scenes, this multinational conglomerate orchestrates employee impregnation by predatory Xenomorphs to further its bioweapon research. Talk about human resources...



## CYBERDYNE SYSTEMS

TERMINATOR

The corporation that created Skynet, a system of artificial intelligent supercomputers that ditched the human element. That little blunder ushered in the rise of the machines. Take heed, Apple!





Elizabeth (Julia Ormond), a corporate executive you don't want to mess with.



Julian (Dennis Haysbert) is head of security with a mean line in interrogation.



Maybe the show will inspire you to buy a new suit.

carrying a covered corpse gets wheeled in. Someone has been murdered – and Julian clearly isn't too happy about it.

"During the series, Julian is suspicious of Ben – there's more going on here than meets the eye," says Humphrey. "What we'll see as time goes on is he has an interesting and close dynamic with Elizabeth. He's very loyal to her and that relationship goes back many years. As he works with Ben, their relationship develops, but he continues to be suspicious of him."

## FUTURISTIC LOOK

Compelling plot and characters aside, a huge draw with these types of projects lies in the futuristic tech. Viewers traditionally eat up the cutting-edge gadgets and gizmos in SF, after all. Humphrey notes that although that element seeps into almost every scene, it happens very organically.

"In the pilot, you see little computer screens that pop up everywhere. Ben comes down the stairs and there's a big, floating screen in the living room. There's a difference in the way people dress. We have future self-driving cars in mass use. I don't think that's a big leap. It's interesting that even when we were doing a test screening for the show how much people responded to that stuff. They love the technology and were

willing to overlook – almost to a disturbing extent – the dystopian effects."

As for the impressive pedigree behind *Incorporated*, it's not often Affleck and Damon champion TV material. The creative power couple is, however, nowhere to be seen today.

"They've been as involved as superstars in this day and age can be," Humphrey offers. "They originally found the project. I came on board with them already involved. They've weighed in in ways big and small – from giving notes on the script when it was just a spec script – to giving us notes in the cut of the pilot before we delivered it. At the same time, of course they aren't in the writers' room or on the set every day. A couple of producers, who work for their company, are much more involved on a day-to-day basis and communicate their company's thoughts that way."

Humphrey feels they have something special on their hands in *Incorporated*.

"It's a show in the best tradition of science fiction," he concludes. "It takes place in a future universe, but really it's about the world we live in today. At the same time, it can be enjoyed as a story that exists on its own merits. We ask some provocative questions, but our goal is to also tell a fun and exciting story." ●

*Incorporated* is on Syfy in the US from 30 November. UK broadcast TBC.

# "THERE'S A LOT FURTHER HE COULD GO"

Sean Teale is Ben Larson



**We see Ben screwing over his co-worker Chad in the pilot. Does that make him harder to root for?**

⚡ He has every intention of fixing that. There are ways around helping Chad and his family. I have to look at Ben as the Road Runner. He's sprinting at such a speed, and his mind works at such a pace, that if he were to look down over that cliff, he would fall. He is doing these horrible things, but there's a lot further he could go. The stakes will get a lot higher than in the pilot.

**Julian is the bogeyman of the Spiga Corporation. How scared should Ben be of him?**

⚡ He's sort of terrifying. There's a consistent cat-and-mouse game between the two of us. Julian is naturally suspicious of everyone. That's what his title requires him to do. He's very much the man I have to be aware of and that Ben has to spend time dodging.

**What is your favourite piece of technology from the show?**

⚡ Ben has designed this device that allows you to enter and exit networks, or other encrypted sites, without leaving any footprints. That allows him access to most things, which would be nice to have in the real world!

GETTY (3)





# THE FLY

Be afraid – be very afraid!  
As Brundlefly turns 30, Luke Dormehl  
revisits David Cronenberg's body  
horror classic...

**T**he Fly's journey to the screen began in the early 1980s, after screenwriter Charles Edward "Chuck" Pogue had returned from England, where he had just written two Sherlock Holmes films, starring Ian Richardson. Pogue hooked up with a young producer named Stuart Cornfeld, today co-producer and business partner of Ben Stiller. They pitched Twentieth Century Fox a remake of *The Fly*, a 1958 B-movie starring David Hedison (later to play Felix Leiter in *Live And Let Die* and *Licence To Kill*) and horror icon Vincent Price. Beginning with the mysterious death of a scientist in a hydraulic press and his wife's confession of murder, the film uses flashbacks to tell the tale of a terrible science accident that transforms its hero into half-man, half-fly.

Pogue was under no illusions about the movie's shlocky status. "It was kind of bad science, as well as bad drama," he tells *SFX*. "The guy goes through the transporter and comes out with this big fly head. What you're left with is a passive hero. He's got no facial emotion and no voice; he's reduced to scrawling words on a chalkboard. Because of that choice, the film shifts to following the wife's descent into madness."

"The original version of *The Fly* was kind of a camp classic," Cornfeld agrees. "It had the scene with the little fly with a man's head at the end, going, 'Help me! Help me!' The original movie gave our version a little familiarity, but it also made it a lower prestige movie. It definitely wasn't a case of people saying, 'Ooh, they're remaking *The Fly*, this is going to be a prestigious production!' A lot of people were laughing at us."

**I**f they were laughing at first, nobody laughed when director David Cronenberg was announced as director. Cronenberg was the perfect filmmaker to helm *The Fly*. In his early forties, he had already established a suitably twisted "body horror" oeuvre which included movies like *Shivers* and *Scanners*. Although he had yet to score a monster-size hit, Cronenberg was considered bankable by Hollywood studios: he was offered such disparate projects as *Total Recall*, *Beverly Hills Cop*, *Flashdance* and *Top Gun* during this time period. *The Fly* sat particularly neatly alongside Cronenberg's previous two films, *Videodrome* and *The Dead Zone*, both of which concerned a male protagonist who becomes wrapped up in horrific events which profoundly alter them. If anything, *The Fly* was a distillation of the themes from these two movies: in the movie, both the origin of the horror and its terrible consequences come from the protagonist. There is no outside agency or villain to blame. *The Fly* is Cronenberg at his most tragic.

All of which makes it all the more surprising that he wasn't the first filmmaker to take on the project. British television director Robert Bierman was hired, only to drop out. "Robert ended up suffering a [personal] tragedy," Cornfeld says. "The movie sort of fell apart at that point."

Cronenberg stepped in to fill Bierman's shoes, but he did more than just replace him. "He came on, but on the







condition he could do a 'page one rewrite'," Cornfeld continues. A "page one rewrite" is Hollywoodese for scrapping the original script and starting again. "The studio was ready to make the film and we already had a workable script, but he felt it wasn't coming from him," Cornfeld says. "It wasn't a proprietary thing, but he had a take on it that was very different to what Chuck and I had been developing. He liked the premise of what we were doing, but our script was not as interesting to him as what he had going on in his mind."

One major concept Cronenberg got rid of was the notion that the two central characters should be married. This was a hangover from the 1958 original, but something Pogue had also felt was key to the story. "My rationale for that was that you needed that kind of emotional connection for them to stay together while he is going through his awful transformation," Pogue says. Cronenberg also amalgamated two of Pogue's characters into one, along with changing the name of protagonist Geoff Powell to Seth Brundle, named after Formula One racer Martin Brundle. What he retained was Pogue's concept that the entire film should be about the metamorphosis of man into fly, rather than making it an immediate transformation.

"Cronenberg has always been very generous in saying that he couldn't have got to his version without my version," Pogue tells *SFX*. "He kept the claustrophobic tone of my script, but maybe even heightened it further." Under Cronenberg, the production's shooting location shifted to his native Canada, while he brought on crew members like cinematographer Mark Irwin, with whom he had worked before.

"We shot for ten weeks in a warehouse that was meant to be Brundle's lab," recalls Irwin, who had the exciting, yet challenging, task of making what was basically a one-location movie visually exciting. "I realised that the room had to become a character in the movie, just like the people. I made it get darker and change progressively and become more mysterious throughout the story as Jeff's character goes through his change."

In addition to Irwin's photography, Cronenberg's direction, Howard Shore's ominous music and the Academy Award-winning make-up effects, one of the best-remembered aspects of *The Fly* is the tremendous lead performance by Jeff Goldblum. Still best known as a character actor, *The Fly* represented Goldblum's leading man debut. Not everyone necessarily approved. Twentieth Century Fox president Larry Gordon was particularly sceptical – although he gave *The Fly*'s crew the benefit of the doubt. "Cronenberg and I went to him and said we wanted Jeff Goldblum to be the lead," Cornfeld says. "Larry Gordon thought that was a horrible idea. He said to us that hiring Jeff would be a big mistake. But he said, 'It's your mistake to make. If that's who you want, go make your film with him.'"

Goldblum's eventual performance blew everyone away. Mark Irwin recalls how the movie was shot in order, and

## BZZZZT!

### A swarm of Flies

While a lot of people remember the campy 1958 movie, in fact the original version of *The Fly* was a 1957 short story, which appeared in *Playboy* magazine, written by George Langelaan. Other subsequent adaptations include 1959's *Return Of The Fly*, 1965's *Curse Of The Fly*, 1989's Cronenberg sequel (minus Cronenberg, Goldblum and Davis) *The Fly II*, and even a 2008 opera by Howard Shore, based on the 1986 movie for which he composed the score. At various points there has been talk of a new sequel being made, although nothing has yet been confirmed.



**“We were told that hiring Jeff Goldblum was a big mistake”**



Geena Davis got out in time to marry Jeff Goldblum (for three years).

Goldblum isolated himself as his character went through its metamorphosis: requiring more and more latex to be applied each day. "Jeff's a talented pianist and we had a piano on set," Irwin says. "Early on he would entertain everyone by playing between takes. Later on, as he got more into the rubber suit and the transformation into Brundlefly, he stopped playing and became far more introspective." In its most extreme stages, the Brundlefly costume Goldblum had to wear took 10 hours to put on and a further six to remove.

Playing opposite Goldblum as his love interest was actress Geena Davis, who married him in real life the year after the film was released. The chemistry between the two is palpable on-screen. The fact that the romance works so well is the emotional beating heart of *The Fly*, just as Chuck Pogue hoped it would be. "The jeopardy in *The Fly* is not about the protagonist turning into a creature, but that love is being lost," Mark Irwin says. "The fact that it ends with Geena's character putting a shotgun to Brundle's head to murder him, so they can both find peace... well, that's David's own personal twist on things."

*The Fly* arrived in cinemas in August 1986. Helped by its iconic tagline "Be Afraid, Be Very Afraid" (suggested by Hollywood legend Mel Brooks, whose company produced the movie), it proved an immediate hit with audiences.

Despite not working on the entire film, Chuck Pogue was happy with how it turned out. "What's always made me proud was when people talk about how it transcended its genre," he says. "I always thought about it as being much more than a monster movie, and it's great to hear that people agree. I felt it really resonated." Pogue's next job was writing a second *Psycho* sequel, another movie which came out in the summer of 1986. A reviewer for an alternative Los Angeles newspaper, *The LA Reader*, wrote an article about his picks for the best two love stories of the summer. He chose *The Fly* and *Psycho III*. He neglected to mention that Pogue was the connection between both. Pogue was later asked to write the script for *The Fly II*, although he turned it down. "I really didn't like their take on it," he admits.

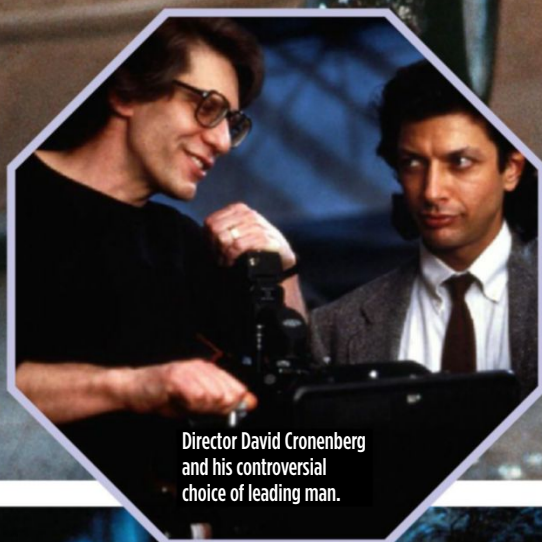
Like the best horror movies, tapping into why *The Fly* worked so well is difficult. It appealed to the same science-gone-awry technothriller sentiment that turned *Jurassic Park* scribe Michael Crichton into a bestselling author. It featured great special effects that appealed to the horror crowd and a human story that made it a weird kind of date movie. There was even an Aids metaphor hidden not too deeply under the surface, which meant the film plugged into a certain terrible zeitgeist.

"Horror is great, because as long as you fulfil the basic obligation of the genre – to scare people – you're really free to do whatever else you want," Cornfeld says. "In a weird way, filmmakers have more autonomy in horror films, and comedy to a certain extent, because the primary thing the studio is interested in is whether it's a scary horror film or a funny comedy." Ultimately, Cornfeld doesn't want to dissect what made it special any more than he did his other favourite horror movies *The Exorcist* and *Rosemary's Baby*. "Honestly, I was just a believer in the thing," he says. "I thought people were going to show up and they were going to like it. I'm glad it's gotten the reputation it has, but I was never trying to second-guess the audience. I just assumed they were just like me – and I was really into it." ●

REX (6)



Now that's what you  
call a morning after  
the night before.



Director David Cronenberg  
and his controversial  
choice of leading man.

## “YEAH, I BUILD BODIES”

The make-up  
of *The Fly*

► If you're a fan of astonishing make-up effects, 1986's *The Fly* is the movie for you. Easily on a par with other '80s classics like *The Thing*, *The Elephant Man* and *An American Werewolf In London*, the fleshy special effects take Jeff Goldblum's Seth Brundle character through six distinct phases of grotesque transformation, until he ends up as the monstrous “Brundlefly”, with a pair of expressive eyes being his only quasi-human feature. The make-up effects were the brainchild of then-30-year-old Chris Walas who rightly won the Academy Award for Special Effects Make-up. Walas later directed *The Fly II*, as well as doing the “melting Nazi” effects in *Raiders Of The Lost Ark* and creating the Gremlins.

There's always time for  
a cuddle at the most  
troubling of times.





---

# IMPROVE YOUR SFX LIFE EVERY FRIDAY!

---



## SIGN UP FOR SFX'S WEEKLY EMAIL NEWSLETTER AND GET

A round-up of the hottest sci-fi and fantasy news from GamesRadar+  
Exclusive competitions /// Deals and discounts /// More!



# SFX

SIGN UP HERE!



JAN  
2017

edited by Ian Berriman

# Reviews

CINEMA 94

HOME ENTERTAINMENT 100

BOOKS 112

COMICS 118

GAMES & STUFF 120

COLLECTABLES 122

94

## DOCTOR STRANGE

Does the Marvel movie have the magic touch?

THIS ISSUE

66

REVIEWS

### Highlights



96

#### ARRIVAL

→ Amy Adams strives to communicate with aliens in this thoughtful and grown-up first contact film.



100

#### STAR TREK BEYOND

→ Kirk and co finally leave Earth behind, but are the results out of this world?



112

#### PRINCE LESTAT & THE REALMS OF ATLANTIS

→ The eleventh *Vampire Chronicles* novel introduces a new species.

→ RATINGS EXPLAINED

★★★★★ SUPERB

★★★★★ GOOD

★★★★★ AVERAGE

★★★★★ POOR

★★★★★ TERRIBLE



CINEMA

## DOCTOR STRANGE

Will you be spellbound?



▶ **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

12A | 115 minutes

▶ Director **Scott Derrickson**

▶ Cast **Benedict Cumberbatch, Tilda Swinton, Mads Mikkelsen, Rachel**

**McAdams, Benedict Wong**

### ◆ The Marvel Cinematic

Universe is such an established phenomenon it's easy to forget it's built on a chain reaction of risk.

From entrusting a superhero tentpole to the tarnished star of Robert Downey Jr to the very idea of an entwined blockbuster universe – a revolution that soon became standard Hollywood exec-think – it's been a succession of smart but somewhat chancy creative choices.

So why does *Doctor Strange* feel such a gamble, such an outlier in a genre-jumping slate that's already given us the techno-Tolkien of *Thor* and the punky, smirking space opera of *Guardians Of The Galaxy*? The character's embedded in Marvel lore, after all. Summoned from the astonishing, psychedelic imagination of Steve Ditko, he was part of the first wave of Marvel icons alongside

Spider-Man, Iron Man and the Hulk. Surely the Sorcerer Supreme's less box office roulette than a talking raccoon?

Scott Derrickson's film sticks to the big beats of the origin story. We meet Strange as a swaggering, glory-seeking neurosurgeon, another brittle-edged entry in Benedict Cumberbatch's gallery of charmless charmers and winning sociopaths (a laconic American drawl distances him from *Sherlock* but adds a visible layer of performance). Caught in a spectacular car crash, he suffers serious damage to his masterly hands and, spiralling into despair and stubble, heads East in search of a cure.

While the comic book Strange found salvation in a remote Himalayan kingdom inspired by the pre-GPS exoticism of *Lost Horizon*, the movie's eager to combat any hint of romanticised otherness. As hidden cities go, Kamar-Taj is positively gap year. And Tilda Swinton's Ancient One is far from the wizened, gnomonic figure scratched by Ditko's pencil – she's androgynous, smiley and desperately contemporary. "She



"Don't suppose you have Netflix?"

never talks about her past," we're told. Maybe she's secretly the same backpacker's guru Swinton played in *The Beach*, 20 chakra-exploring years later.

As the Ancient One initiates Strange into the occult, Derrickson initiates us into the wows. There's a wonderful velocity to the effects sequence that first hurls Strange across the dimensions. Playing like the *Doctor Who* title sequence on a bad acid trip, it pushes the visual language of the MCU into extraordinary new places, taking clear cues from Ditko's molecular dreamscapes. Elsewhere Derrickson makes the act of spell-casting seem visceral, elemental: fiery runes are

“Pushes the visual language of the MCU to new places”

carved from the air, spitting sparks like welding gear. Portals to other realities whirl like Catherine wheels.

Perhaps it's the very idea of magic that makes this more of a Marvel gamble than usual. Maybe that's why the movie does its best to demystify the mystic arts,

The bus was late but at least the shelter was nice.







nailing down the nebulous and the unknowable as a simple branch of physics. Magic, we're assured, is "the source code that shapes reality". Endless talk of quantum multiverses and spatial paradoxes may allow Strange to fit seamlessly alongside the Avengers but it also steals something away, something special. It feels like a post-mortem, not an explanation; magic laid on a slab and picked at with a scalpel.

The plot's perfunctory – Mads Mikkelsen's immortality-chasing mage steals a forbidden ritual to unleash a demonic presence upon the world – but it's patched with Marvel's trademark flippancy (there's a priceless Beyoncé gag), some equally witty effects

sequences involving Strange's sentient cloak, come to life like a classic Disney creation, and some charismatic performances: Benedict Wong makes his namesake a hilariously deadpan badass while Cumberbatch, angular as quartz, not only looks the part but adds mischief and humanity to one of Marvel's more aloof heroes. Shame Rachel McAdams finds herself saddled with a criminally underwritten role. She even gets to say, "I don't understand what's happening," god help her.

While the climax reduces one of Ditko's great villains to the kind of gaseous, generic menace found in too many mediocre superhero

movies, it's at least preceded by some great inventive action sequences. Skyscrapers buckle, streets twist and concertina, cities reduced to puzzlebox playgrounds. It's *Inception* pushed to the limit.

You wish the linear, by-the-numbers storytelling had some of the surprise of those twisting streets but there's ambition and promise in Marvel's magical quarter. *Doctor Strange* nudges the doors of perception. Maybe a sequel will kick them wide open. Maybe all it needs is a little more risk. **Nick Setchfield**

**i** Strange's full name is Stephen Vincent Strange – a nod to horror star Vincent Price, an inspiration for the character.

## STRANGE BY NAME...

Steve's not the only other one...



### JONATHAN STRANGE

One of a pair of feuding mages in Susanna Clarke's *Jonathan Strange & Mr Norrell*, this equally sorcerous Strange was a young pretender to the crown of English magic.

### DR CARLO STRANGE

Marvel's original Doctor Strange – appearing only two months before the master of the mystic arts – was a minor league Iron Man villain with electro-mental powers.

### HUGO STRANGE

One of Batman's most chilling, insidious opponents, Hugo Strange is a shrink with a serious Dark Knight obsession and a sideline in creating monstrous superhumans.

### JOHN STRANGE

*Strange*, the BBC's brief early noughties foray into Saturday night demonology, saw a disgraced priest fighting to clear his name while battling occult forces.

### ADAM STRANGE

DC's definitive Silver Age space hero and the champion of planet Rann, he's a human adventurer bringing justice to the spaceways by the power of jet-pack.





CINEMA



Eyeliner classes, day one.

## YOUR NAME

Studio Jubbies



RELEASED 24 NOVEMBER

12A | 106 minutes

Director Makoto Shinkai

Cast Ryunosuke Kamiki, Mone Kamishiraishi, Masami Nagasawa, Etsuko Ichihara

At the time of writing, this animated movie is the ninth highest-grossing film in Japanese history, a success that has earned its director, Makoto Shinkai, comparisons to Hayao Miyazaki. Flattering, obviously; yet *Your Name* is not a Studio Ghibli film. It's more grounded, more Young Adult, more risqué and funny.

It follows Taki and Mitsuha, two teenage strangers divided by distance (Taki in Tokyo, Mitsuha in a small rural town), but brought together when they start waking up in each other's bodies. This, as you can imagine, is

an education about the opposite sex, with Taki taking full advantage of his new-found breasts — an initially off-putting gag that gets funnier as it runs. But it's also an intimate insight into another life; a way for them to develop the most unconventional of relationships.

It's a fun idea, one that Shinkai (who adapted *Your Name* from his own novel) executes with wit and romance, channelling the youth of his characters into fresh, exuberant energy — the kind that sweeps you into investment. This is particularly useful come the final act, which is long, muddled and confusing — but ultimately saved by Taki and Mitsuha, a “will they, won't they” you actually care about. **Stephen Kelly**

*Your Name's* body-swapping story is based on 12th century Japanese literature, rather than *Freaky Friday*...

## ARRIVAL

ET phonemes



RELEASED 10 NOVEMBER

12A | 116 minutes

Director Denis Villeneuve

Cast Amy Adams, Jeremy Renner, Forest Whitaker, Michael Stuhlbarg

“Not everyone is able to process experiences like this,” Amy Adams's character is warned early on in *Arrival's* second act. It's a sentiment that applies to her journey, to some audiences (we heard confused voices as we left our screening) and to the act of adaptation itself.

The first sci-fi movie for director Denis Villeneuve, it's based on Ted Chiang's Nebula Award-winning novella *Story Of Your Life*. It follows Louise Banks, a professor of linguistics recruited by the US military to be part of the world's first communication with an alien species, whose 12

enigmatic ovoid spacecraft are hovering at seemingly random points around the globe.

To outline more would be a disservice to *Arrival's* carefully crafted delivery, but it's safe to say that the book's complex beauty has been lost in translation somewhat in the process of creating a mainstream sci-fi movie (albeit one with a greater air of intelligence than the usual blockbuster fare). That said, it's still an excellent, grown-up film.

It's anchored by Adams's astonishing, Oscar-worthy performance — silently conveying grief, loneliness, awe and fear, via micro-expressions that'll have you gripped, desperately trying to map her emotional inner world.

Jeremy Renner also impresses, bringing a subtle sensitivity to his slightly nerdy scientist. It's such a perfectly pitched supporting turn



Despite the nuclear war, *Countdown* continued as normal.

that it could almost go unnoticed, but Renner's doing great work, allowing you to connect with his character while amping up Adams's impact.

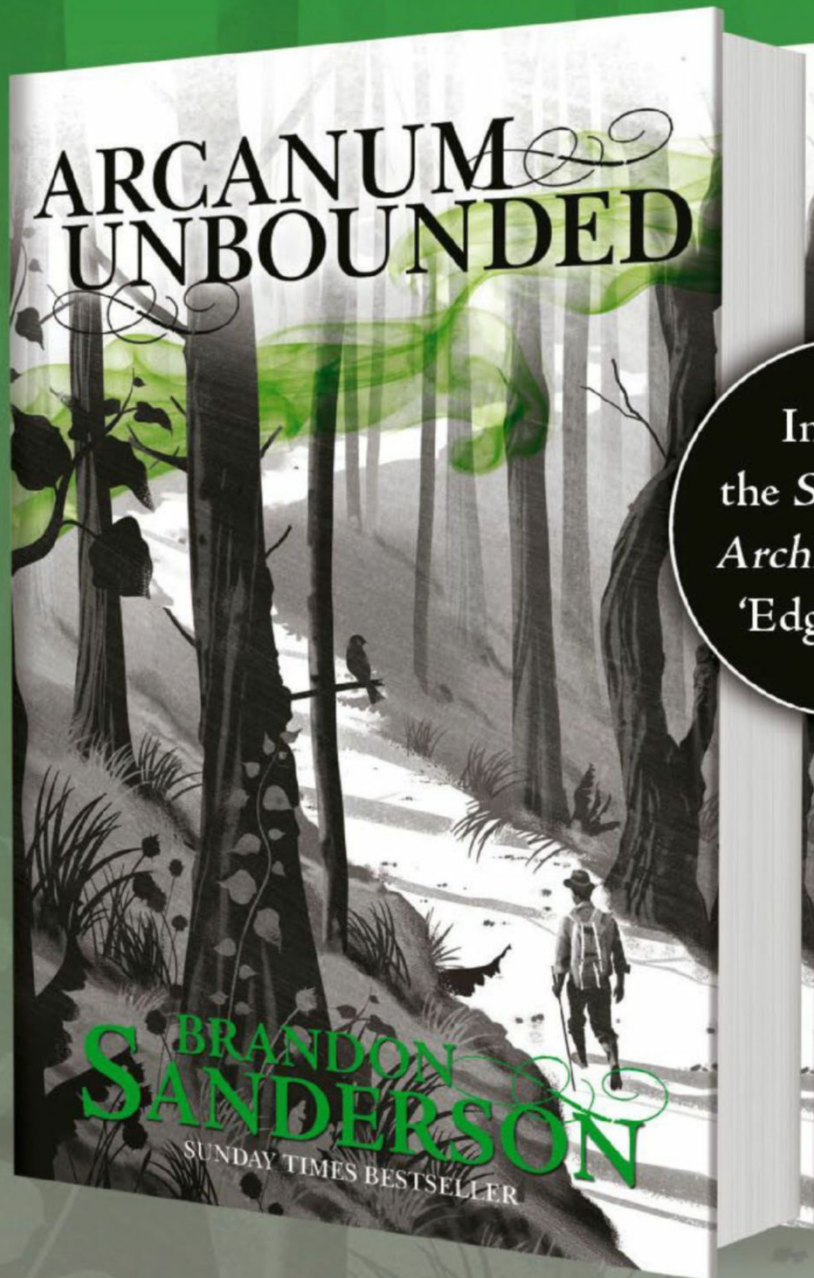
It's clear Christopher Nolan's work has had an impact on Villeneuve. Fans of *Inception*, *Interstellar* and *The Prestige* will find plenty to enjoy here. We're not sure *Arrival* has the layered

rewatch value of those movies — there's less going on than it seems, especially for anyone who enjoyed the original novella. Some may need a second watch, though, thanks to a couple of muddled reveals. So, not perfect then. But definitely worth experiencing. **Sam Ashurst**

Villeneuve had been wanting to make an SF movie for ages. “I was a sci-fi addict when I was a kid... That was my drug!”



Enter the internationally  
bestselling worlds of  
**BRANDON  
SANDERSON**



Includes  
the *Stormlight*  
Archive novella  
'Edgedancer'

Discover the complete Cosmere collection



CINEMA



On the plus side, no more dentist bills.

## OUIJA: ORIGIN OF EVIL

### Board to death



▶ **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

15 | 99 minutes

▶ Director Mike Flanagan

▶ Cast Elizabeth Reaser, Annalise Basso, Lulu Wilson, Henry Thomas, Lin Shaye, Doug Jones

❖ **If Hasbro is hoping the *Ouija* franchise will help sell more of its famous “talking boards”, it might be disappointed. Despite some striking product shots, this *Ouija* prequel really doesn’t make playing with that iconic planchette look appealing...**

Set in Los Angeles in 1967, the film follows the widowed Madame Zander (Elizabeth Reaser) and her two daughters as they attempt to make a living by tricking bereaved customers into thinking they can communicate with the other side. Then they add a Ouija board to the act and things get weird.

If you didn’t see the first *Ouija* movie, it’s not a problem; while this is technically a prequel, it’s also a standalone story in its own right. And it’s better than the first movie – the period details, including background noise about failed Moon landings, and lashings of eyeliner, make for an interesting setting, and *Oculus* director Mike Flanagan makes every character likeable, even the obvious cannon fodder, which effectively amps up the fear factor.

It’s a pity the final act descends into full-on CGI mouth-stretching and ceiling-skittering, but if you grit your teeth and ignore the cheap effects, it’s pretty solidly spooky. Worth seeing? The planchette is pointing to the letters Y-E-S. **Sarah Dobbs**

**i** 1980 horror *The Changeling* was a big influence on the film. Mike Flanagan and his DoP watched it repeatedly.

## WE ARE THE FLESH

### Sick Cave



▶ **RELEASED 18 NOVEMBER**

18 | 80 minutes

▶ Director Emiliano Rocha Minter

▶ Cast María Cid, María Evoli, Diego Gamaliel, Noé Hernández

❖ **Let’s be clear up front, *We Are The Flesh* isn’t for everyone. If we described everything it contains, this review would need an 18 certificate.**

It’s ostensibly about two young siblings, homeless and starving, and their burgeoning relationship with a troll-like older man who lives in an underground nest with easy access to eggs. In return for food and shelter, the old man requires them to break personal taboos, taboos that include – but are definitely not limited to – incest, murder and cannibalism.

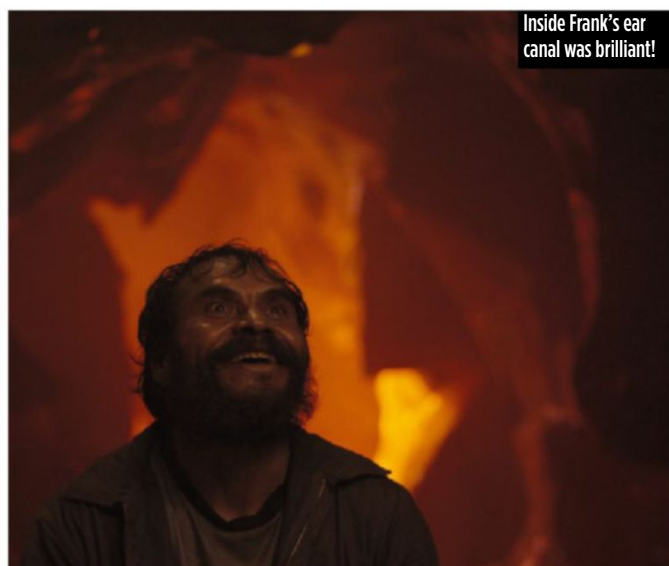
So far, so exploitation cinema, but there’s a reason Alejandro

González Iñárritu and Alfonso Cuarón have sung young writer/director Emiliano Rocha Minter’s praises. This is a powerful, visually impressive film, full of ugly beauty and poetic violence. Iñárritu and Cuarón know a director when they see one, and this is clearly the beginning of a long career.

Still, as gorgeously lit and shot as it is, we haven’t seen a film this grim since *The Garbage Pail Kids Movie*. Some cinema trips require you to bring tissues, to dab away tears. This one makes you wish you had a wet wipe to clean the screen. A vomit bag might also be a good idea.

But despite the disgust factor, this is an important, timely narrative, with a political subtext that only becomes clear in the film’s revolutionary final moments.

It begs the question: why do



Inside Frank’s ear canal was brilliant!

we watch horror movies? For some, it’s to test boundaries, to see what we can handle. For others, it’s a process of catharsis. Some people just want a date movie. If you’re in the latter camp, swerve this film like it’s roadkill. It’s probably the most disturbing horror debut since *Hellraiser*.

It’s definitely the grossest.

The script says it best. At one key moment, a character calmly states: “This is not your average party.” This is not your average movie. **Sam Ashurst**

**i** Emiliano Rocha Minter was inspired by the art project of a friend, who built a cave of cardboard in his apartment.





Corbyn had again chosen the floor.

## TRAIN TO BUSAN

Going loco



▶ **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

15 | 118 minutes | Also VOD

▶ Director Sang-ho Yeon

▶ Cast Yoo Gong, Soo-an Kim, Dong-seok Ma

◆ **Sang-ho Yeon's Korean** horror does for zombie movies what Gareth Evans's *The Raid* did for martial arts flicks, blending intensity, imagination and WTF-ery to rocket the genre to unexpected places.

An outbreak of flesh-chompers has reduced Seoul to chaos, and a bullet train speeds towards the titular city in hope of delivering its passengers to survival. But a strange little girl clambers aboard just as it pulls off, and the carriages soon fill up with ravenous hordes – just as the blurred landscapes outside the bloody windows are also clogged with gnashing fiends.

Blending claustrophobic suspense with frenzied setpieces and vitriolic class satire (this would make an inspired double-bill with Joo-ho Bong's *Snowpiercer*), *Train To Busan* puts the loco in locomotive. Yeon should also be congratulated for punctuating the crazed action with character beats, though the bonding between a work-obsessed dad (Yoo Gong) and his young daughter (Soo-an Kim) overdoes the schmaltz.

Not that you'll be complaining: the last 15 minutes is so large-scale bonkers it's like Yeon is making a live-action cartoon – not surprising, perhaps, given his background is in anime. **Jamie Graham**

**i** Sang-ho Yeon also directed the animated horror *Seoul Station*, set the day before *Train To Busan*.



"I need some furniture – now!"

## THE WAILING

You may wail with confusion



▶ **RELEASED 25 NOVEMBER**

15 | 156 minutes | Also VOD

▶ Director Hong-jin Na

▶ Cast Do Won Kwak, Jung-min Hwang, Jun Kunimura

◆ **If you'd happily never** watch a Catholic exorcism ritual again, here's some good news: this Korean possession horror provides a little variety by drawing on a different cultural tradition.

After a string of brutal family murders by village folk who've suddenly gone violently insane, suspicion falls upon a newcomer – a Japanese man. Could he be laying curses? When the daughter of nebbish cop Jong-Goo (Do Won Kwak) starts doing her best Linda Blair impression, he decides to set due process aside...

The comically ineffectual Jong-Goo makes for an unusual protagonist, displaying flashes of protective fury once his family comes under threat, but always remaining a bit pathetic. The sequences featuring the prancing shaman he calls in are fascinatingly colourful. And there's an interesting subtext about xenophobia, possibly.

However, you may be left bewildered by the head-scratching final reel, which after pulling the rug from under your feet then tries to slide it back under them again, before finally whipping you about the head with it, leaving it unclear exactly what message the film is trying to convey. See you on the IMDb discussion threads...

**Calvin Baxter**

**i** Director's Hong-jin Na's starting point was an image of "evil approaching from far away to show its identity to you".



Dress-down marriage ceremonies: cool.

## RUPTURE

Put through her Rapaces



▶ **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

15 | 99 minutes | Also VOD

▶ Director Steven Shainberg

▶ Cast Noomi Rapace, Michael Chiklis, Kerry Bishé, Lesley Manville

◆ **Rupture marks the** directorial return of Steven Shainberg, last seen 10 years ago with terrible Diane Arbus biopic *Fur*, but best known for his bold 2002 spunk-'em-up *Secretary*. As you'd expect from an idiosyncratic indie auteur, it's one weird-ass film – a sci-fi hostage horror fuelled by off-kilter mood and mystery.

The victim is Renee (Noomi Rapace), an everyday mother kidnapped by a strange band of scientists. Terrified, she's taken to an underground bunker, where they attempt to terrify her even further – playing on her greatest fear, spiders. It's here that *Rupture* is at its best – when building a sense of creepiness and confusion. Who are these hammy weirdos? Why are they scaring people? And just what is "rupturing"? They're intriguing questions, asked via a suspenseful, claustrophobic horror with spirited performances. It's just a shame about the answers.

Does a poor destination negate an enjoyable journey? In this case, yes; it doesn't matter if the flight was smooth if the plane crashes and burns upon landing. And that, sadly, is how disappointing the third act of *Rupture* is – a film nowhere near as clever or original as you're led to believe.

**Stephen Kelly**

**i** Steven Shainberg originally intended for *Rupture* to be a found-footage film about an alien abduction.



"Now to write evil on messageboards..."

## TROLLS



▶ **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

U | 92 minutes

◆ **Cynics can sneer at another** retro toy being crowbarred into a toon franchise, but *Trolls* isn't made for them. DreamWorks' latest is 90 minutes of pure happy.

Anna Kendrick and Justin Timberlake voice two gnomes who set off to rescue their friends from a cooking pot, but the story's really just an excuse for a lot of singing. Animated to look like the world is made out of Fuzzy-Felt and Play-doh, it's as if someone gave a six-year-old a movie studio to play with.

**Paul Bradshaw**



Corden's green room was well weird.

## LET'S BE EVIL



▶ **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

15 | 82 minutes | Also VOD

◆ **The age of techno-fear** looms large in *Let's Be Evil*.

It follows chaperone Jenny as she looks after gifted kids in a pitch-black learning facility, only visible through Augmented Reality glasses.

This unreliable reality is well-suited for horror – especially when the kids begin to take control. Yet *Let's Be Evil*'s drive is a single, flat note. No mystery to unravel, no plot developments, just people looking scared until the twist – which really isn't worth waiting for. **Stephen Kelly**



## STAR TREK BEYOND

Krall space

SPOILER WARNING!

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

▶ RELEASED

21 NOVEMBER (Blu-ray/DVD)

14 NOVEMBER (download)

2016 | 12 | 4K Blu-ray/Blu-ray 3D/

Blu-ray/DVD/download/VOD

▶ Director Justin Lin

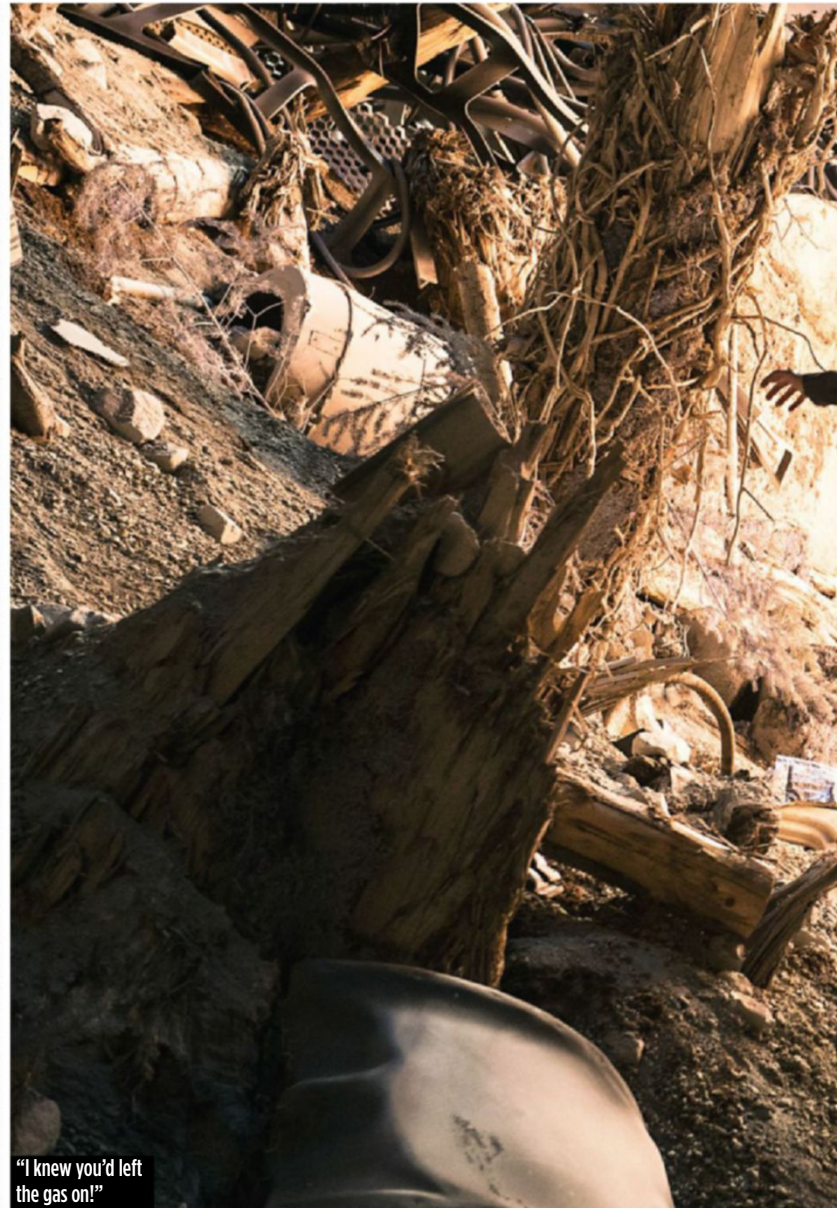
▶ Cast Chris Pine, Zachary Quinto, Karl Urban, Zoe Saldana, Simon Pegg

🔹 We're now well over seven years into Paramount's mission to reboot the *Star Trek* movie franchise, and it's pretty clear the Enterprise crew are no longer flying at maximum warp. The energy, fun and sense of adventure that made JJ Abrams's first movie such a refreshing antidote to run-of-the-mill blockbusters now feel like a distant memory – *Star Trek Beyond* seems rather happier recycling old tropes than boldly going where no one's gone before.

That's not to say it's a bad movie – there certainly isn't anything in *Beyond* as infuriating as the *Wrath Of Khan* cover version that was *Into Darkness*'s final act. It's more that *Beyond* is nothing more than a moderately entertaining way to pass a couple of hours, with little that lingers in the memory beyond the closing credits.

It's caught between wanting to be a mass-appeal sci-fi actioner, and being faithful to *Star Trek*'s history. It's the former that wins out, with a plot that could be lifted from AN Other space movie, and the Trekiness limited to in-jokes (Kirk referencing his constantly ripped shirts; a captain's log about life becoming "a little episodic") and story elements pinched from earlier movies. For example, haven't we already seen a James T Kirk starting to feel his age? After *The Search For Spock* and *Generations*, isn't destroying the Enterprise a little old hat? Yes, it's brave trashing the ship in the opening half hour, but your response to a movie's big setpiece shouldn't be, "Oh no, not again."

*Beyond* is also hamstrung by its villain. Krall (the usually reliable Idris Elba) is essentially a mishmash of clichéd humanoid alien prosthetics and story ideas that add up to less than the sum of their parts. Why a former Starfleet officer – albeit one whose life has been artificially prolonged by alien tech – would have developed such a beef with the Federation is never made entirely clear. Surely the ancient race who constructed the



"I knew you'd left the gas on!"



The front room's decor was a little drab.

swarm ships that Krall uses to tear the Enterprise apart would have made far more threatening, more interesting baddies?

The 13th *Trek* movie is not without its merits, however. Visually it's stunning, from Federation space city Yorktown to incoming director Justin Lin's gift for filming the Enterprise in ways we've never seen before – the shot of the ship in a warp bubble is one of *Beyond*'s few moments of pure, unadulterated geek service. And while Chris Pine has lost the wisecracking edge that made his first appearance as Kirk so

“Little lingers in the memory beyond the credits”

memorable, other characters do get the chance to come to the fore – it's great to see Karl Urban's wonderful, irascible take on Bones (arguably the character closest in tone to the original incarnation)





## CHRIS PINE

James T Kirk in  
*Star Trek Beyond*



### What impressed you about the screenplay?

→ I really liked it because it's a big theme to tackle: "What now?" It's a very mid-life thing. Motivations change, priorities change. Does the Federation mean anything? Should we be fighting for it? It was a combination of that – the action I never really care about – and the humour, because Simon [Pegg] is funny and Doug [Jung] totally got it. It was always fun coming up with chances to make people smile. We had good energy on this one – the composite energy of true *Trek* fans and then people who are just fans of stories. You throw those people together and a new energy is created.

### We're deep into the five-year mission now...

→ What Simon and Doug did so intelligently is show the flipside of these tentpole films. What's Thor doing with his hammer when there's no one to kill? What is this Enterprise crew doing on the days off? They've got to repaint the thing that got busted and they're getting coffee from the cafeteria... All these quiet moments, what it would be like to be on a submarine for six months. These guys are away for five years with the same people. We show a little bit of that, which is great.

**Nick Setchfield**

given so much screentime, while newcomer Jaylah is charming, funny and kick-ass. Sofia Boutella is surely destined to join the Enterprise A crew next time out.

Mostly, though, *Beyond* feels like the product of a once-promising franchise whose thrusters are now stuck in reverse. For *Trek*'s 50th anniversary, we expected better.

• **Extras** Don't be fooled by the seemingly impressive number of featurettes (nine) on the Blu-ray releases – the combined running time only just creeps over the hour mark, and the cast and crew deliver the sort of bland soundbites

that saturate the internet ahead of a movie's release. Best of the bunch are "Exploring New Worlds" (six minutes), a celebration of the movie's wonderful production design, and "New Life, New Civilizations" (eight minutes), which looks at the *Beyond* make-up team's mission to create 50 distinct alien species in honour of *Trek*'s 50th. Alas, considering how big a deal half a century of *Trek* should be, the celebration is strangely muted – "To Live Long And Prosper"'s efforts to condense the franchise's history into eight minutes via the medium of Kelvin

timeline talking heads and movie clips are frankly laughable. Two spurious deleted scenes are a waste of their combined 44-second duration, while the five-minute gag reel is moderately amusing.

Just behind-the-scenes piece "Beyond The Darkness" (10 minutes) and tribute "For Leonard And Anton" (five minutes) make it onto the DVD – though DVD buyers also get Rihanna's "Sledgehammer" music video, and trailers. **Richard Edwards**

**i** One of those 50 alien species is represented by Amazon founder Jeff Bezos – he plays a Starfleet official on Yorktown.





His trampoline broken, Karl desperately tried other ways to get in the air.

## DRINKING GAME

Knock back a beverage of your choice every time...

- ☪ Claire Temple mentions "this lawyer she knows".
- ☪ "Coffee" means "sex".
- ☪ Cottonmouth's Biggie Smalls painting makes an appearance.
- ☪ Luke Cage's hoodie is as full of holes as Swiss cheese.
- ☪ A real band or singer appears on the Harlem Club stage.
- ☪ Luke Cage says, "Sweet Christmas!"
- ☪ Cottonmouth says, "Don't call me Cottonmouth!"
- ☪ You need to know basketball to understand the dialogue.

# LUKE CAGE Season One

## Bulletproof Hunk



★★★★★

▶ **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

2016 | 15 | SVOD

▶ Showrunner Cheo Hodari Coker

▶ Cast Mike Colter, Simone Missick, Mahershala Ali, Rosario Dawson

**NETFLIX** Although not credited in the cast list, the real star of *Luke Cage* is Harlem. The latest Netflix series makes it look like a brilliantly vibrant, creative, colourful, culturally important must-see stop on anyone's grand tour. Even with all the random ultraviolence. Though some viewers might need a phrasebook to translate lingo like "You know I ain't calling no po-po. Then he bounced."

Admittedly, you get the feeling this is a rose-tinted view of the place; an idealised Harlem. What

you can't deny is that Marvel and Netflix haven't abandoned their usual stomping ground of Hell's Kitchen for purely aesthetic reasons. *Luke Cage* is black to its core; it's about black issues; its soul is pure soul music; it's achingly topical. The current real world clashes between cops and racial minorities are reflected here, and in no way does it feel trite.

The amazing thing is that it does this while being the most superhero-y Netflix show yet. Sure, there's the requisite quota of grim and gritty, as Luke Cage reluctantly steps out of the shadows to free Harlem from the grip of a gangster dynasty headed up by nightclub owner Cornell "Cottonmouth" Stokes (Mahershala Ali). But there's also

more comic-book-style fun, quipping and superheroics.

So while the series is effortlessly cool and has street cred, it's also adorably geeky. There are loads of Easter Eggs for Marvel fans to pick up on; if hearing Misty Knight being told at one point that she might lose her arm makes you smile, there's plenty more like that to enjoy.

As Cage, Mike Colter is great at conveying a guy who's torn between world-weary victim and tough guy who just loves bashing things. The villains are first rate too. *Jessica Jones*'s Kilgrave is a tough act to follow, so *Luke Cage* has gone for quantity instead, giving us a colourful range of psychopaths, from the coiled-spring Cottonmouth, to the

gloriously bonkers Mariah Dillard and the unsettlingly creepy Shades (Theo Rossi). There's also somebody else, who it'd be a spoiler to mention, who's an oddly one-note, one-grudge baddie – but even he's only a failure on Netflix/Marvel terms and is better than most of the MCU villains. There are some fantastic roles for the female good guys too; Rosario Dawson's Claire Temple finally gets a decent chunk of the action, while Simone Missick's gutsy Misty Knight makes you wish Netflix would commission a *Daughters of the Dragon* series right now.

There are the usual Netflix pacing issues. A few episodes towards the end are artlessly padded and plod. Occasionally the attempts to give the show a '70s blaxploitation vibe feel a little self-conscious. But ignore such quibbles and let this black magic cast its spell over you. **Dave Golder**

**i** All of the series' episode titles are the names of songs by influential East Coast hip hop duo Gang Starr.





Other sights seen through Roger Moore's *For Your Eyes Only* legs.

## THE NEON DEMON

Looks aren't everything

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★  
**RELEASED OUT NOW!**  
 2016 | 18 | Blu-ray/DVD/download/VOD  
 Director Nicolas Winding Refn  
 Cast Elle Fanning, Jena Malone, Bella Heathcote, Abbey Lee

❖ If *The Neon Demon* were projected onto the walls of the Tate Modern it would make a beautiful piece of motion art. As a film with an apparent narrative it's less successful.

Possibly after digesting Dennis Pennis's bon mot, "In any other job if you walk around like a drug-crazed zombie you get the sack, but in the fashion industry you get a multi-million-dollar cosmetic contract," 16-year-old Jesse (Elle Fanning) moves to Los Angeles, and runs into bitchy models, egotistical designers and a strange lesbian stylist, who may actually be the biggest threat.

Is it horror? Is it sci-fi? Kind of, because Refn creates another world here, strikingly shot, stunningly lit and immaculately furnished – with darkness lurking just beneath the surface.

But it's a frustrating film, rarely as good as you'd like it to be. It plays better in the memory than in real time, where one vague, glacially paced sequence follows another. The story isn't strong enough and the characters aren't interesting enough to sustain two hours of arresting imagery. Style over substance is its mantra.

❖ **Extras** Two short featurettes: one on the music (six minutes); one featuring brief interviews with the director and star (four minutes). Plus a trailer and a gallery. **Russell Lewin**

**i** While directing, Refn wore a keffiyeh wrapped round his waist to feel secure – he called it his "power blanket".

## BLACK MIRROR Season Three

Electric Streams

★★★★★  
**RELEASED OUT NOW!**  
 2016 | 15 | SVOD  
 Creator Charlie Brooker  
 Cast Mackenzie Davis, Alex Lawther, Bryce Davies Howard, Charles Babaloia

**NETFLIX** Fans might have felt trepidation at Charlie Brooker's tech-nightmares show leaving spiritual home Channel 4 behind for the wider horizons of Netflix. Thankfully the results are a triumph. Season three feels like a faithful continuation of what came before, but also, thanks to slicker production values and a more high-profile roster of talent, a significant progression.

Satisfyingly, it sees Brooker exploring a greater variety of

setting, format and tone. Sure, season three still has that darkly bitter *Black Mirror* tang, and an episode like "Shut Up & Dance" could slot seamlessly into any series. Others, however, feel like quite a departure. Retro romance "San Junipero" is genuinely heartwarming, to the point where you could argue it has a feelgood ending. The calamitous farce of social media dystopia "Nosedive" (surely inspired by app Peeple?) is as close to this series has come to out-and-out comedy. And if you charged people to watch feature-length police-procedural "Hated In The Nation" in cinemas, few would feel short-changed.

Adding these extra flavours was a smart move, because there are



moments where you could just begin to feel that *Black Mirror* is retreading old ground. The themes of "Hated In The Nation" overlap with series one's "The National Anthem". And "Shut Up & Dance" shares its high concept with simply scores of DTV horrors.

But these are pretty petty gripes. Even a slightly less successful episode like VR-game tale

"Playtest" – which promises a kick-out-the-jams horror romp it never quite delivers – is by turns intriguing, haunting and gross. There isn't really a weak link to be found across these six instalments – and how many anthology shows can you say that about? **Ian Berriman**

**i** Brooker says "Hated In The Nation" might get a follow-up: "I've sort of figured some characters from that could recur."



## THE RENOWN PICTURES MONSTER COLLECTION

Bonkers B-movie bonanza

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

▶ **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

1957-1977 | PG | DVD

▶ Directors Ooh, loads of people

❖ **This box set features nine** films, mostly dating from the late '50s. It's impossible to go into detail on every one, but they do have shared qualities. Expect giant insects or lizards, preposterous science, copious grainy stock footage, fag-smoking middle-aged heroes and pointy-sweatered heroines, old-fashioned attitudes to African "natives", and vintage sexism so blatant it prompts guffaws. In the case of the four British entries, also expect the

bathetic juxtaposition of high weirdness with, say, grumbling punters in spit-and-sawdust pubs.

With scripts and production values never Oscar-worthy, the highlights are the most out-there entries. Best of the bunch: the campy *Woman eater*, in which a scientist seeking a life-restoring serum puts women into a trance with some bongo bashing, then feeds them to a faintly indecent-looking carnivorous tree. *The Killer Shrews* sticks toothy masks on some dogs, then has them digging through the walls of a research centre; with its bizarre dialogue, shabby sets and ludicrous conclusion (which sees

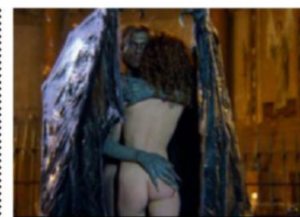
our heroes building a foot-powered tank out of steel drums) it is, incredibly, even dafter than the title suggests. The misleadingly-named *The Strange World Of Planet X* ("Planet X" is actually Earth – bah!) is barking too, mashing together a *Day The Earth Stood Still*-ish "alien visitor delivers a warning" plot with a killer tramp and a wood full of face-chewing giant insects. Meanwhile, *Gorgo* and *Behemoth The Sea Monster* make a decent fist of transplanting the building-trampling carnage we usually associate with Tokyo to London.

Most entries clock in sub-70 minutes, which on occasion is a mercy. *Monster From Green Hell's* interminable trudge through a stock-footage Africa in search of giant wasps soon gets tedious, while *The Giant Gila Monster* is more interested in talking about hot rods than its inexplicably outsized lizard. Technical standards can disappoint too: late-'70s Plesiosaur cobbles *The Crater Lake Monster* looks cruddy, while *Beast From Haunted Cave* (debut of Monte Hellman, director of cult road movie *Two-Lane Blacktop*) has very muffled audio.

That said, this remains a solid way for anyone with a soft spot for cheesy old B-movies to score several weekends' worth of amusing hokum. You couldn't call any of these films "good" – well, not while keeping a straight face – but watched en masse they numb your critical faculties enough to acquire a naive charm.

❖ **Extras** A new interview with *Woman eater* star Vera Day (13 mins); 1999 doc *Man Or Beast* (eight mins) – a puzzling inclusion, given that it covers films like *Dr Jekyll And Mr Hyde*. **Ian Berriman**

**i** *Monster From Green Hell* pinches lots of footage from the 1939 Spencer Tracy movie *Stanley And Livingstone*.



It was an odd edition of *Songs Of Praise*.

## THE CHURCH

Holy terror

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

▶ **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

1989 | 18 | Blu-ray/DVD

▶ Director Michele Soavi

▶ Cast Hugh Quarshie, Tomas Arana, Feodor Chaliapin Jr

❖ **Helmed by Dario Argento's** regular assistant director, this batsarse Italian horror's main accomplishment is to locate its pneumatic drill suicide and goat demon-humping in Budapest's Matthias Church, a stunning example of 14th century gothic. True, the most outlandish sequences were shot on a soundstage reproduction, but you still wonder how the hell they got away with it.

The plot, such as it is, sees an infection of evil released after someone uncorks the mass grave of witches on which the building was built. Cue some eye-poppingly sacrilegious sequences – like an orgiastic tableau of writhing corpses rising from the church's floor.

Shame the work-of-many-hands script is such a mess. The role of protagonist keeps changing hands, and gruesome setpiece deaths elicit no reaction. At times it's like watching a film where they ran out of money before they could shoot all the connective scenes. Still, there's something bracing about watching a film that causes you to splutter things like, "Where did that decapitated head suddenly come from?!"

❖ **Extras** A decent interview with director Michele Soavi (25 minutes) tackles topics such as script problems, the locations and the music. **Ian Berriman**

**i** A scene in which a woman embraces a winged demon was inspired by Boris Vallejo painting "The Vampire's Kiss".



Caught in a web in *The Strange World Of Planet X*.





Never forget to put the lid on the blender.

## DARLING

Does as the Romans do

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

▶ **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

2015 | 18 | DVD

▶ Director Mickey Keating

▶ Cast Lauren Ashley Carter, Sean Young, Larry Fessenden

❖ **"There's not a movie like it,"** writer/director Mickey Keating says of *Darling*. There's an obvious retort: "Yeah, there is. *Repulsion*."

To be fair, Keating also acknowledges the obvious debt that this tale of a young woman's psychological fracturing owes to Roman Polanski's filmography. Lauren Ashley Carter plays the titular house-sitter, a moon-eyed gothic Alice charged with looking after a New York residence with a mysterious locked room. Soon some malefic influence is driving her over the edge...

What separates this black and white chiller from its '60s

forebears is its sense of style, one as deliberate as a hand-tailored mod suit. An over-reliance on jittery jumpcuts and stroboscopic lighting eventually starts to feel gimmicky, but for the most part this is elegant filmmaking, which – with its chanteuses warbling from crackly vinyl and icing-pink intertitles calligraphy – has an appealingly timeless quality, and the simplicity of a fairytale.

However, it never seems like anything *more* than an exercise in style. Don't expect to actually *feel* anything, other than an appreciation for the director's impeccable taste.

➤ **Extras** Three snippets of director interview (seven minutes); the trailer. **Ian Berriman**

**i** The house used as the main location was found by star Lauren Ashley Carter – she was working as a dog walker for the owner.



Pam Rose and her Leesub Sirin figure.

## ELSTREE 1976

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

▶ **RELEASED 14 NOVEMBER**

2015 | 12 | DVD/VOD

❖ **They also served:** the Imperial grunts and faceless Rebels who populated the background of that galaxy far, far away. This doc tracks down the extras and bit-part players of *Star Wars* – along with Dave Prowse, who feels slightly too famous for the premise.

Complete with tales of petty rivalries and spiritual salvation in the afterlife of conventions, it's a melancholy, amusing, ultimately uplifting look at fame on a microbiotic level.

➤ **Extras** Commentary; extended interviews; featurette; trailer. **Nick Setchfield**



"10p for a cuppa tea, guv?"

## THE MAN FROM PLANET X

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

▶ **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

1951 | PG | DVD

❖ **There's plenty to scoff at in** this B-movie, in which an alien resembling a bloke in a papier mâché Victor Meldrew mask visits Orkney – chief among them the *dire* accents.

But there are points of interest too: threatened by a scientist to gain his secrets, the visitor seems more sinned against than sinning. And director Edgar G Ulmer conjures a gloomy gothic atmosphere on fog-shrouded sets recycled from 1948's *Joan Of Arc*.

➤ **Extras** Trailer. **Ian Berriman**



Vic Reeves searched for yet more cheese.

## ATTACK OF THE LEDERHOSEN ZOMBIES

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

▶ **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

2016 | 15 | Blu-ray/DVD

❖ **Nothing good ever comes of** neon green goo in the movies. Sure enough, when an Alpine ski resort owner fires up his goo-powered snow machine, he unleashes a zombie plague.

Yes, this is a zom-com, but what it lacks in scares it makes up for in action, jokes and FX. The plot's flimsy, but it packs more fun into 77 minutes than this subgenre's seen in years.

➤ **Extras** Making Of; trailer.

**Sarah Dobbs**



It wasn't the couple's best wedding shot.

## THE REZORT

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

▶ **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

2016 | 15 | VOD

❖ **There's an obvious way to** sum up the plot of *The Rezort*: it's *Jurassic Park* with zombies.

Ten years after the outbreak of a virus, a shadowy corporation is running an undead safari... Then there's a security breach, and the guests become zombie chow.

It's better than it sounds. While the action sequences are generic, the characters are well drawn, and there's righteous anger sloshing about amid the entrails. Indeed, the political satire might even bite harder than the zoms.

**Sarah Dobbs**



## HOME ENTERTAINMENT



Tempers frayed in the *Bake Off* finale.

### THE MAN WHO FELL TO EARTH

A Lad Insane

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

▶ **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

1976 | 18 | Blu-ray/DVD

▶ Director Nicolas Roeg

▶ Cast David Bowie, Rip Torn,

Candy Clark, Buck Henry

● **Nicolas Roeg's cult classic** casts an outsider's eye on '70s America. His viewpoint character is a literal alien, Thomas Jerome Newton (David Bowie, in his first screen role). Newton has arrived on Earth in the hope of finding a source of water for his barren home planet. Instead, he finds – and quickly succumbs to – a surfeit of booze, sex and TV, before the military take an interest...

Both funny ha ha and funny peculiar, Roeg's film is a disorientating experience, its plot minimal and at times opaque. It's unquestionably dominated by Bowie, with the director coaxing an astonishing performance from his star. Glassy-eyed and remote, he's also vulnerable and naive, bewildered by this mad world and the venal hangers-on who try to exploit Newton's genius. Ironically, he's one of the most recognisably human characters here.

● **Extras** New to this 40th Anniversary release: four new interviews and a piece on the confusing history of the score. You also get four archive interviews, a 2003 Making Of, and trailers. The Blu-ray comes with a CD of some of the score, booklet, four artcards, press book and A4 poster. **Will Salmon**

**i** A pilot for a *Man Who Fell To Earth* TV show (starring Lewis Smith) aired in 1987, but didn't go to series.



And now the group only had nine more Wetherspoons to visit.

### STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS

The talk is strong with this one

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

▶ **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

2015 | 12 | Blu-ray 3D

▶ Director JJ Abrams

▶ Cast Daisy Ridley, John Boyega,

Oscar Isaac, Harrison Ford

**COLLECTOR'S EDITION** No director's

cut here – this is the same film Disney released on regular Blu-ray and DVD in April.

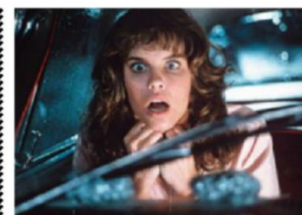
● **Extras** “I apologise in advance,” JJ Abrams says early on in his new-to-this-release commentary, because he doesn't think he's very good at them. Thankfully, he's wrong – this is a brilliant talk track, packed with facts and memories directly tied to on-screen events.

Whether JJ's dealing out revelations (Kylo Ren was going to have Phasma's outfit at one point), making behind-the-scenes confessions (Adam Driver flew into rages because his costume was so restrictive), or defending the plot devices he incorporated from the original film (comparing *Star Wars* to Westerns and fairytales), it's endlessly fascinating.

JJ's contribution is so good it makes the new featurettes feel like watch-once fluff. “Foley: A Sonic Tale” (four minutes) demonstrates the low-tech approach to making the movie's sounds. “Sound Of The Resistance” (seven minutes) contains the revelation that BB-8 had proper, recorded, in-English placeholder dialogue. The best part of “Dressing The Galaxy” (six minutes) is the stuff about the evolution of Kylo Ren's costume. “Inside The Armory” (eight minutes) has solid behind-the-scenes shots of lightsaber fights. Finally, “The Scavenger And The Stormtrooper” (12 minutes) is a relaxed chat between Daisy Ridley and John Boyega. (NB There are also three further deleted scenes, which we weren't be able to see.)

All decent, but fairly forgettable. But despite the Dark Side of this double-dip, we still recommend this. The commentary alone is worth the cost. **Sam Ashurst**

**i** Abrams's commentary track confirms the call-sign of the Stormtrooper played by Daniel Craig: FN-007!



“I've forgotten to update my TomTom!”

### CHRISTINE

Greased Frightening

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

▶ **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

1983 | 18 | Blu-ray/DVD (dual format)

▶ Director John Carpenter

▶ Cast Keith Gordon, John Stockwell,

Alexandra Paul, Harry Dean Stanton

**BLU-RAY DEBUT** *Christine*

could've been a campy mess. The plot's pretty daft: nerdy Arnie (Keith Gordon) buys a clapped-out old banger and, in restoring it, finds himself becoming cooler, meaner, and more able to stand up to bullies – especially because his car is sentient and can run them over for him.

Another director might've let you laugh at Christine revving her engine and winking her headlights. Not John Carpenter. He approaches Stephen King's story with deadly seriousness. Arnie's transformation is striking and scary, and though there's not much on-screen violence, the threat is crystal clear: this is a story about boys coming of age.

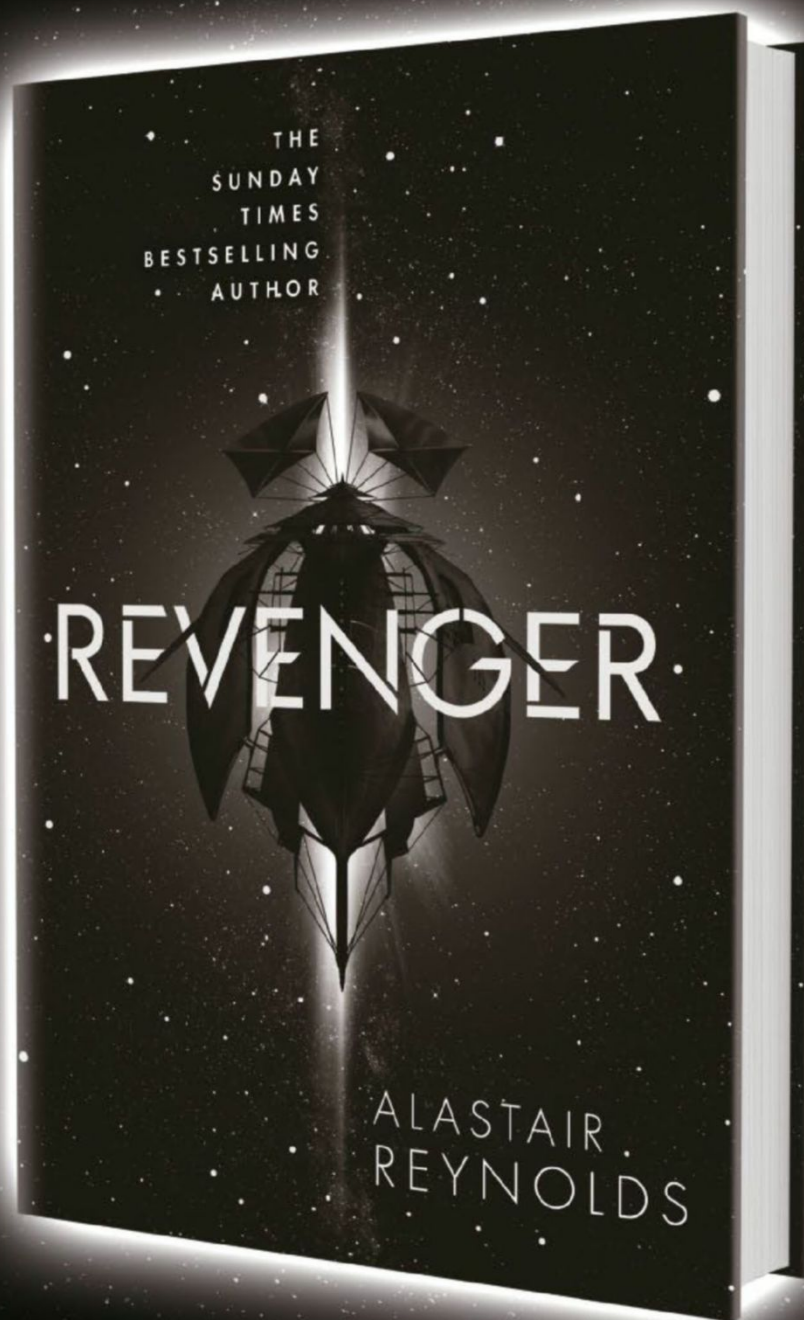
The soundtrack combines '50s rock and roll hits with Carpenter's trademark synths in a way that's alternatively atmospheric and funny, and this crisp new Blu-ray transfer looks as pristine as Christine herself when she first rolled off the production line. This film isn't usually cited among Carpenter's best, but maybe it's time for a rethink.

● **Extras** Commentary by Carpenter and Gordon; a Making Of, from 2003 (48 minutes); deleted scenes (26 minutes); isolated score; trailers; gallery; a booklet. **Sarah Dobbs**

**i** Twenty-four cars played Christine on-screen – a mixture of Plymouth Furys, Belvederes and Savoyes.



In the rubble of a ruined universe  
an epic adventure awaits . . . .



**'A mastersinger of the Space Opera'**  
*The Times*



Out now where all good books are sold







Barry hadn't acted this way on the first date.

## THEM! Ant Rap

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

▶ **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

1954 | PG | Blu-ray & DVD (dual format)

▶ Director Gordon Douglas

▶ Cast James Whitmore, Edmund Gwenn, Joan Weldon

**BLU-RAY DEBUT** Halfway through

this atomic age monster movie there's a short real-life nature film about ants and how they operate. It's fascinating, arguably more so than the main feature surrounding it, and it also rather shows up the movie's ant puppetry.

Harsh perhaps, because *Them!* is a solid sci-fi suspenser. But, crikey, there are more meetings in it than a lawyers' annual jamboree – talk is cheap, and giant ants are expensive, presumably. It's a good 27 minutes before we see outsized mandibles, after the initial investigations into a ransacked store and a battered corpse found

in the desert. When it turns out that giant radioactive ants are to blame, there's meeting after meeting to discuss the threat. We get more discussion of the threat than sight of the threat itself, which is a shame if only because of the spooky humming the insects make when they're around.

A fiery, sewer-set climax finishes things on a high. *Them!* was a popular and influential film, but its impact has inevitably been weakened – if it's more polished man vs bug action you're after, maybe stick *Starship Troopers* on?

▶ **Extras** Three minutes of out-takes, providing glimpses of the crew operating the giant ants; trailer; gallery. This HMV exclusive also comes with four artcards. **Russell Lewin**

i A young Leonard Nimoy makes a brief appearance as an army sergeant reading a report of "flying saucers shaped like ants".

## INDEPENDENCE DAY: RESURGENCE

Bore Of The Worlds

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

▶ **RELEASED**

14 NOVEMBER (Blu-ray/DVD)

OUT NOW! (download)

2016 | 12 | 4K Blu-ray/Blu-ray 3D/

Blu-ray/DVD/download

▶ Director Roland Emmerich

▶ Cast Jeff Goldblum, Liam Hemsworth, Jessie T Usher, Maika Monroe

▶ **Despite the message sent at the end of 1996's *Independence Day*, Roland Emmerich never really intended to make a sequel. Still, here he is, with a whole new CGI toybox at his fingertips. But to paraphrase a Jeff Goldblum character from another '90s outing, *Resurgence* proves that just because he *could* it doesn't mean he *should* have.**

For while the sequel – set 20 years after the aliens last attacked – has one or two fun ideas (like a rebuilt, united Earth with retro-engineered alien tech) and the charisma firepower of Goldblum and the other *ID4* veterans, the result is much less than the sum of its parts. Excess replaces emotion, and what character work there is coasts on cliché and warm feelings for those who first met the extra-terrestrial menace. The new recruits, meanwhile, are never fleshed-out beyond their basic tropes – including Liam Hemsworth's troubled hero and Maika Monroe's driven President's daughter.

Raising the stakes is one thing, but Emmerich has swapped the



The "which breakfast cereal is best" discussion continued.

focused damage of the last film for setpieces that have more volume and a lot less weight. And while there are some stabs at suggesting a wider scope of conflict and other alien races, it feels less authentic to the story and more like he's been encouraged to fill the corners in with franchise opportunities for the Cinematic Universe-obsessed world we now inhabit.

▶ **Extras** Director's commentary on the movie and eight deleted scenes (nine minutes); a 53-minute Making Of (only available digitally with the Blu-ray); a short faux doc about the 1996 war; a fake local news interview; a gag reel; concept art; trailers. **James White**

i Jeff Goldblum brought the play *Death Of A Salesman* to set, and would have his cast mates read it between takes.





"I've found an anti-ageing serum!"

## BATMAN: RETURN OF THE CAPED CRUSADERS

Holy Lazarus!

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

▶ **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

2016 | PG | Blu-ray/DVD/download

▶ Director Rick Morales

▶ Cast Adam West, Burt Ward,

Julie Newmar, Jeff Bergman

• **The Batman TV show** has enjoyed a renaissance in the past few years, from its own, pop-coloured comic book title to a box set of the original episodes, finally sprung from years of rights hell.

Now comes this new animated movie, reuniting the voices of original stars Adam West, Burt Ward and Julie Newmar. Ward still sounds as though he could slip into the tights; there's more of a disconnect with West's voice. He's clearly older but his comic gift is intact and he effortlessly recaptures the deadpan sincerity of the Caped Crusader, straight man to the universe.

It's all here: alliteration-crazed dialogue, demented death traps, Catwoman's purr. A faithful celebration of the '66 *Batman*, it also pushes beyond the limitations of the original show: at one point the adventure rockets into space, courtesy of a Bat-shuttle.

Throw in some sly satire at the expense of Frank Miller's dreary old nihilism and you have a Bat-comeback to treasure.

• **Extras** Behind-the-scenes promo featurettes for animated movies *Batman Vs Robin* and *Son Of Batman*. **Nick Setchfield**

i Ward and West also voiced the Dynamic Duo in '70s animated show *The New Adventures Of Batman*.



Strange Susan always paid people to watch her sleep.

## iZOMBIE Season One The Working Dead

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

▶ **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

2015 | 15 | DVD

▶ Creators Rob Thomas,

Diane Ruggiero-Wright

▶ Cast Rose McIver, Malcolm Goodwin, Rahul Kohli, Robert Buckley

• **The Walking Dead changed so much.** Ten years ago the idea of a zombie TV series was unthinkable. Now the concept's so mainstream that "undead" can be the personality quirk for a detective, like Monk's OCD or Bones's poor social skills.

Because that's basically what this adaptation of Chris Roberson and Michael Allred's Vertigo comic is: a detective series, given added teen appeal by a female protagonist (now working in a morgue, not the cemetery of the comic) who uses the memories she gains from eating brains to help solve murders.

Sadly, these grafted-on cop show elements are the weakest part of these 13 episodes. The fact that nobody raises an eyebrow at a morgue assistant routinely taking part in police questioning is ludicrous, and the cases of the week are rarely

particularly interesting, the investigations often perfunctory. You may find yourself wishing they'd dump them, the way *Angel* quickly downplayed the private eye business.

Fortunately in Liv (Rose McIver) and English boss Ravi (Rahul Kohli) the show has a couple of likeable leads, and the weekly personality changes Liv undergoes as those memories give her new abilities add interest; she's kinda a zombie Joe 90. When the show focuses on the undead subculture and the machinations of Blaine, David Anders's Spike-like, bleached-blond zombie drug dealer, it comes to life. It's just a shame that in altering the premise, *Veronica Mars*'s Rob Thomas and Diane Ruggiero-Wright have lost the ghosts, werewolves and possessions that were part of the comic. Anyone who's read that will have the constant nagging feeling that this show could be so much more interesting.

• **Extras** Deleted scenes (seven minutes) and the 2014 Comic-Con panel. **Ian Berriman**

i Anders got tips from James "Spike" Marsters on reducing the pain of peroxide. The trick's to put sweetener in the mix!



Things were looking up on Tatooine.

## ONE MILLION YEARS BC

Grunt work

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

▶ **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

1966 | PG | Blu-ray & DVD (dual format)

▶ Director Don Chaffey

▶ Cast Raquel Welch, John

Richardson, Robert Brown

BLU-RAY DEBUT **Hammer's**

prehistoric fantasy plays like a Creationist rally at the Playboy mansion. Dinosaurs walk the world alongside Raquel Welch's glam, Max Factored cave-woman, that extinction event asteroid just a daft rumour from another, significantly less entertaining reality.

The history's absurd, of course, for all that a deep, meaningful voiceover assures us that "This is a story of long, long ago, when the world was just beginning".

The plot's little more than photogenic neanderthals lobbing sticks at dinosaurs – the thin, dialogue-free story really drags – but it's all about the visuals. The volcanic landscapes look grander than ever in this 4K restoration, while you're left in no doubt why Welch became an icon. The camera doesn't just love her. It builds cathedrals in her name.

Powering it all are Ray Harryhausen's eternally charming effects. Watch his fabulous pterodactyl steal Welch to the skies and you'll wish history had been this much fun.

• **Extras** Interviews with Raquel Welch and Martine Beswick; stills gallery; a gallery of original storyboards and concept drawings. **Nick Setchfield**

i John Richardson screentested to play Bond in *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*, but lost out to George Lazenby.



## HOME ENTERTAINMENT



Working on the railway was tough but invigorating.

## BEYOND THE WALLS

### House Of Pain



▶ **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

2016 | SVOD

▶ Director Hervé Hadmar

▶ Cast Veerle Baetens, François Debblock, Geraldine Chaplin, Lila-Rose Gilberti

**SHUDDER** New horror-themed subscription service Shudder's most eye-catching launch title is this UK premiere of a three-part French miniseries.

After Lisa (Veerle Baetens) inherits an old house from a mysterious benefactor, she finds a hidden passage leading to The House, a bewilderingly labyrinthine structure with no apparent means of escape...

A classy, atmospheric series, it eschews jump scares and gore in favour of enigma, eerie imagery, and a strong sense of the uncanny. The House operates as a metaphor

for dealing with grief, with the emotionally withdrawn Lisa forced to confront feelings about her dead sister. There's also a star-cross'd romance, as she bonds with Julien (François Debblock), a soldier who strayed into The House from 1916 and has worked out some of its rules.

Whoever scouted the locations deserves special praise; they combine dereliction and grandeur to create a world of scenic decay. Don't expect to be gripped by terror; at most, The House's sinister "First Men" – slowly crawling figures smeared in black oil – might cause a creeping sensation of unease. But if you've ever struggled to escape a mental state, *Beyond The Walls* will strike a haunting chord. **Ian Berriman**

**i** Our pick of five cult movies available on Shudder: *The Beyond*, *Black Sunday*, *The Children*, *Carnival Of Souls*, *Spider Baby*.

## GAME OF THRONES

### Season Six

### Inglorious Bastards



**EXTRAS** ★★★★★

▶ **RELEASED 14 NOVEMBER**

2016 | 18 | Blu-ray/DVD/download

▶ Showrunners David Benioff, DB Weiss

▶ Cast Emilia Clarke, Lena Headey,

Kit Harington, Peter Dinklage,

Maisie Williams

❖ **"I have had more shit thrown at me than any other actor on this show,"** says Kit Harington in one of the behind-the-scenes documentaries on this set. He's referring to actual shit (as in mud, blood and god only knows what else), but he could be speaking psychologically as well, given the crap the back-from-the-dead Jon Snow goes through this year. This is most notable in 2016's finest hour of telly, "Battle Of The Bastards", which combines the

fight at the start of *Gladiator* with every battle from *The Lord Of The Rings*, to stunning effect.

Elsewhere there's a satisfying sense that everything's finally coming together for the show's climactic showdown (still two seasons off, mind), and while Arya does suffer from a depressingly repetitive subplot this season, in every other respect the show is on top form.

❖ **Extras** The DVD has a few deleted scenes, including a longer version of the play Arya watches (it's good fun, but you can see why they cut it), as well as a 20-minute piece on the Dothraki and two 30-minute documentaries (the one on the filming of "Battle Of The Bastards" is jaw-dropping: so much mud!). There are also

Frank's dandruff was becoming embarrassing.



commentaries on every episode – three actually have two. The actors' commentary on "The Door" is a highlight, although brace yourself for some screaming...

The Blu-ray adds In-Episode Guides which enable you to identify characters, places and histories on screen as you watch, plus an impressive array of 18 cartoons, narrated by the actors,

illustrating moments from Westeros and Essos history. Finally, the download comes with featurettes on "Bran's journey", Dothraki culture and prosthetics, plus five instalments of continuing docuseries "The Game Revealed".

**Jayne Nelson**

**i** "Battle Of The Bastards" took 25 days to film, using 500 extras, 600 crew, 80 horses and 160 tonnes of gravel.



# Reviews



It's HG fackin' Wells, you slaaags.

## THE NIGHTMARE WORLDS OF HG WELLS

Wells in Roald Dahl mode

★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

▶ **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

2016 | 15 | DVD

▶ Director Adrian Shergold

▶ Cast Ray Winstone, Michael

Gambon, Luke Treadaway

❖ **Casting Ray Winstone as** HG Wells is a ripping wheeze that sadly sends out all the wrong signals about this otherwise rather po-faced Sky Arts adaptation of four of the author's short stories.

There's some evidence that these four tales are *supposed* to be blackly comic – a sort of *League Of Gentlemen's Tales Of The Unexpected*. The subject matter is certainly rum old toot: an artist whose painting comes to life to seduce him; an aged eccentric who body-swaps to stay alive; an etymologist haunted by a rival reincarnated as a moth; a baker who discovers the most magical mushrooms ever. But the stuffy, lifeless staging, stylised sets and one-mood tone mean that even a fine cast struggle to make these nightmares entertaining, though there are *some* wonderfully bizarre moments.

Also, Wells was no Roald Dahl. His short horror stories rarely have a proper twist or surprise conclusion ("The Late Mr Elvisham" comes closest). Instead they go down the morality tales route, and that really does suck the fun out of the more fanciful concepts.

❖ **Extras** None. **Dave Golder**

Writer Graham Duff cameos as a doctor in one story. He was also a Death Eater in the last *Harry Potter* film.

## (ROUND UP)



Lovers of bad taste horror will be delighted by the release of **THE HERSCHELL GORDON LEWIS FEAST** (out now, dual-format Blu-ray & DVD). This Amazon-exclusive box set collects 14 films by the cult director who basically invented the gore film. Only a handful of them – like 1967 vampire tale *A Taste Of Blood*, or 1968 sex-robot tale *How To Make A Doll* – really exist in SFX territory, mind; psychos, rednecks and delinquents are more common themes – as is violence to the female form... Beginning with a multi-episode failed trip to France to try to convince Bonnie Prince Charlie not to fund the Jacobite rebellion and ending with the Battle of Culloden, **OUTLANDER SEASON TWO** (out now, Blu-ray/DVD) continues to be the most gruesome and harrowing historical romance ever. Stylish, gorgeously shot and impeccably acted, it also knows how to turn pure cheese into drama effortlessly. Finally, BBC Store now have some great vintage children's TV available (out now, download) – much of it available to buy for the first time. They include four episodes of classic teatime gameshow **THE ADVENTURE GAME** (1980); Arthurian-inspired serial **MOON STALLION**, with *Who's* Sarah Sutton (1978); and spooky E Nesbit adaptation **THE ENCHANTED CASTLE** (1979). Sadly the Beeb only announced this range the day before release! We'll take a look at them – plus BBC Store's animated restoration of classic *Who* story "The Power Of The Daleks", also unavailable before our deadline – next issue.

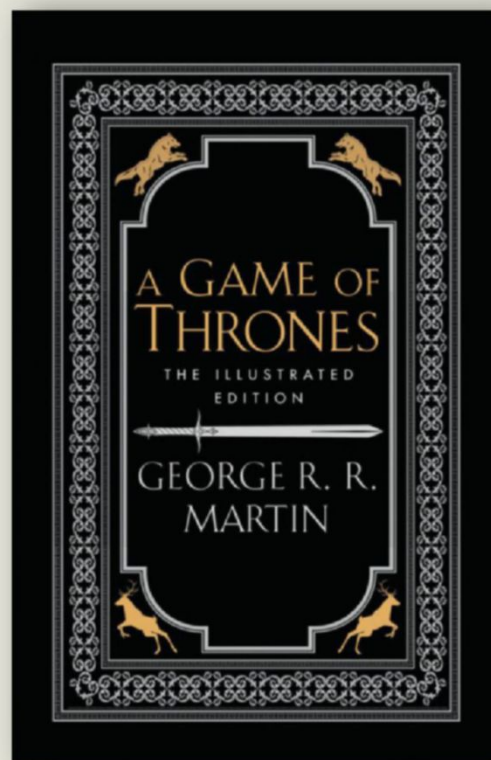
WHSmith

# EXCLUSIVE OFFER!

A GAME OF THRONES  
BY GEORGE RR MARTIN

# FOR HALF PRICE!

Only £15 with this voucher (RRP £30)



TAKE THIS TO YOUR LOCAL HIGH STREET WHSMITH



This voucher entitles you to get *A Game Of Thrones: Illustrated Edition* by George RR Martin for £15. Voucher is valid from 9 November 2016 to 6 December 2016 only in WHSmith High Street stores. Excludes Outlet stores, Online and Travel stores including those at airports, railway stations, motorway service stations, hospitals and work places. Subject to availability. Cannot be used in conjunction with any other promotional voucher. Only one voucher can be redeemed per transaction and it must be surrendered upon use. No cash alternative. Photocopies will not be accepted and the voucher is not transferable. WHSmith reserves the right to reject any voucher it deems, in its sole discretion, to have been forged, defaced or otherwise tampered with.





## PRINCE LESTAT & THE REALMS OF ATLANTIS

Another portion of Rice



► **RELEASED 29 NOVEMBER**

496 pages | Hardback/ebook

► Author Anne Rice

► Publisher Chatto & Windus

◉ **If you had to pinpoint a** moment when our contemporary obsession with vampires started, the 1976 publication of Anne Rice's *Interview With The Vampire* is as good a place as any to begin. Here was a novel that, even 40 years on, seems strikingly modern with its premise of a world-weary, hyper-self-aware and occasionally self-loathing bloodsucker telling his story.

It may be overstating matters to argue that without Rice, we wouldn't have got *Buffy*, *Twilight* and *True Blood*, but *Interview* is certainly key for the way it showed vampire tropes were adaptable. But, the thought occurs reading Rice's latest *Vampire Chronicles* book, perhaps only so adaptable...

Rice has continued to set her bloodsucker stories in the contemporary world, and we're now 14 novels in (so the odd spoiler may follow for newbies, incidentally). To keep a sequence going so long, she's often explored and re-explored the backstories of her recurring characters, notably brattish antihero Lestat de Lioncourt who's now, as the title suggests, vampiric royalty – and sharing his body with an ancient spirit, Amel, who created the first bloodsucker.

The problem is that just as garlic, crosses and a tendency to combust when faced with daylight once weighed down attempts to

“*Atlantis* isn't one of Rice's best novels”

reinvent vampire fiction, the heft of *The Vampire Chronicles* has started to exert a similar effect in Rice's fiction. Against this backdrop, where could she possibly take her story next?

Enter the unpromisingly named Derek, who for years has been imprisoned by a vampire, Roland. And feasted upon too – yet this draining of Derek's blood hasn't turned him into a bloodsucker or even a gibbering acolyte, because Derek isn't human. Rather, from the perspective of Lestat and co, Derek is something new: an immortal, albeit one who spent millennia entombed in ice and thus not conscious of the passing of time. He and his kind, the “Replimoids”, may pose a threat to the continued existence of vampire kind. At which point, it's tempting to ask, as a human reader, potential prey in any world where vamps exist: so what?

One answer is that one of the strengths of Rice's best novels has been to show us vampires from the vampires' perspective. Here are beings that worry about their murderous behaviour – that are exotic, yet remain creatures we can identify with because they share many of our foibles. The trouble is that *Atlantis*, for all it contains some bravura passages, isn't one of Rice's best novels. Instead, it's a book full of talky-talky vampires musing on metaphysics and aesthetics – particularly when Lestat takes centre stage.

An attempt to link vampire mythology to tales of Atlantis is problematic too: it seems an inherently backward-looking and conservative move when applied to a sequence that began by dragging vampire fiction into modernity. The Atlantis passages may, moreover, give older readers the sinking feeling they're reading a book that recalls Erich von Däniken's cheesy, 1970s-naïf *Chariots Of The Gods?* Having helped rescue vampire fiction from Transylvanian castles, Rice may have created a mythology just as suffocating as the idea of yet another Dracula story. **Jonathan Wright**

**i** Josh Boone (*New Mutants*) has co-written the script for a remake of *Interview*; it'll also draw on sequel *The Vampire Lestat*.



## THE ICE LANDS

Twin Freaks



► **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

325 pages | Hardback/ebook

► Author Steinar Bragi

► Publisher Macmillan

◉ **With their windswept** deserts, Iceland's volcanic hinterlands are a perfect setting for an unsettling horror story.

Centring on four friends forced to shelter at a remote farmhouse after their jeep breaks down, *The Ice Lands* makes good use of its atmospheric natural surroundings. After being taken in by a mysterious couple, divisions between the quartet worsen as they discover that there's no escape from the eerie, limbo-esque environment they're apparently stuck in.

Reminiscent of *The Shining*, *The Ice Lands* has also been compared to *Twin Peaks*, although it actually has more in common with less fantastical Nordic Noir authors like Stieg Larsson, as Steinar Bragi savagely critiques the corrupt practices that led to Iceland's 2008 banking collapse.

The cast of characters is unsympathetic, and the first half especially would have benefitted with a few less discursions into their dodgy financial dealings and sexual peccadillos. More emphasis should have been placed on the Icelandic myths evoked – particularly as some have a bearing on the characters' grisly fate. And though curiously compelling, the way the ambiguous ending leaves much left unresolved is frustrating. **Stephen Jewell**

**i** Icelandic horror is rare, but we can just about recommend 2009's *Reykjavík Whale Watching Massacre*.





## AN ALMOND FOR A PARROT

Eighteenth century excess



► **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

400 pages | Hardback/ebook

► Author Wray Delaney

► Publisher HQ, HarperCollins

◉ **“Picaresque”** is the term for a type of story that focuses on a single character’s journey from innocence to experience. Perhaps unsurprisingly, given that this genre’s heyday was in the libertine 18th century, it has a reputation for being a bit on the raunchy side.

Any doubts as to which side of the innocence/experience fence *An Almond...* might fall are washed away by an early, knowing reference to *Moll Flanders*. Wray Delaney goes all out for her beautifully-realised Georgian setting, and decorates it, gleefully, with great swathes of bedroom action for plucky protagonist Tully Truegood, a magician’s apprentice/courtesan who can see ghosts. The result is a slightly unholy cross between *Pretty Woman* and the more subversive delights of Angela Carter’s *Nights At The Circus*.

*Almond* is much more bawdy than erotic – we stopped counting when the number of euphemisms for male genitalia reached double figures – and while this lightness of touch may be an intentional reflection of the period’s literature, the smut and romance both sit uneasily, tonally speaking, alongside grimmer plot elements like forced marriage, rape and murder. **Nic Clarke**

◻ Used by various Jacobean dramatists, the phrase “an almond for a parrot” means “silly, meaningless prattle”.

## STAR WARS PROPAGANDA

The art of persuasion



► **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

112 pages | Hardback/ebook

► Author Pablo Hidalgo

► Publisher Harper Design

◉ The *Star Wars* galaxy is so vast and complex that its “history” can feel like a living, breathing thing. This in-universe book – subtitled *A History Of Persuasive Art In The Galaxy* – recounts decades of turmoil in the Republic, Trade Federation, Empire, Rebellion, New Republic and First Order as if they actually happened.

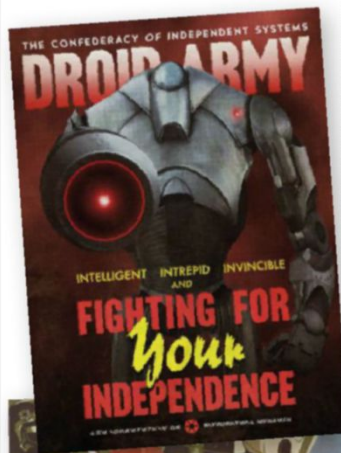
It’s tied together by art that skilfully riffs on various styles of propaganda from 20th century Earth – posters with slogans like

“Loose Lips Bring Down Starships” and “Remember Alderaan: Never Forget”. The designs are almost uniformly brilliant, showing an ingenious knack for twisting the medium to mesh seamlessly with the iconography of a galaxy far, far away.

The words are slightly less successful. “Written” by veteran Bith artist Janyor (in reality Pablo Hidalgo, a member of the Lucasfilm Story Group that oversees *Star Wars* canon), the book combines art criticism with history lesson. While it’s admirably thorough – and far-reaching enough to venture beyond the movies to spin-off novels and *Star Wars Rebels* – it’s all a little too dry and textbook-ish to truly engage. Indeed, it would arguably be better without all those words getting in the way.

**Richard Edwards**

◻ One poster has the *Clone Wars* animation version of Count Dooku – Janyor describes it as a “grotesque caricature”.



“The designs are brilliant”



## SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE SHADWELL SHADOWS

Baker Street, irregular



► **RELEASED 15 NOVEMBER**

448 pages | Hardback/ebook

► Author James Lovegrove

► Publisher Titan Books

◉ **Setting the forensic logic** of Arthur Conan Doyle against the gods and monsters of HP Lovecraft, *The Shadwell Shadows* launches a trilogy of uncanny adventures with one foot in *The Strand Magazine* and another in *Weird Tales*.

Playfully blurring the lines between fact and fiction, James Lovegrove affects to have received the Cthulhu Casebook manuscripts from a distant relative of Lovecraft. Are they really the work of Dr John Watson, finally unburdening himself of the *real* secrets of his Baker Street years? Could they have been written by Lovecraft? Or is it all an elaborate hoax?

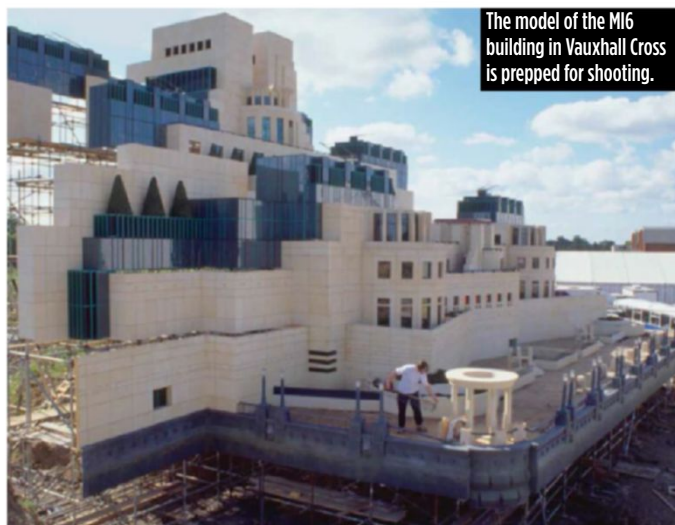
The early chapters are rooted in the familiar Holmesian milieu of Hansom cabs and Limehouse opium dens, before events gradually move into the more fantastical Lovecraft territory of snake men and cosmic beings.

Throughout, Lovegrove’s rich, vivid prose helps steer the book clear of penny dreadful territory – though Holmes purists should still steel themselves for generous helpings of what Mycroft calls “mystical guff”. **Paul Kirkley**

◻ Other recent Holmes mashups include *A Study In Brimstone* and *Sherlock Holmes And The Servants Of Hell*.



## BOOKS



The model of the MI6 building in Vauxhall Cross is prepped for shooting.

## THE MAN WITH THE GOLDEN EYE

Sets and violence



► **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

176 pages | Hardback

► Author **Peter Lamont**

► Publisher **Signum Books**

● **Peter Lamont** was one of the most respected art directors and production designers in movies. Winning an Oscar for *Titanic*, he also worked on the likes of *Aliens*, *True Lies* and *The Boys From Brazil*, along with 18 James Bond films. This book features the 86-year-old's recollections from *Goldfinger* to *Casino Royale* (he only missed *Tomorrow Never Dies*).

Lamont's memory is keen. He recalls events from 50-odd years ago, like when he initially feared the Fort Knox he'd built for *Goldfinger* was too big (it turned out fine); a tussling Sean Connery and producer Kevin McClory

“Rare on-set photos lift the prose throughout”



Roger Moore with PM Harold Wilson.

tumbling into a pool while making *Thunderball*; the bullet hole he painted on the windscreen for the final tragic scenes of *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*. Rare on-set photos and design sketches lift the prose throughout.

Along with numerous variants on “yes it looked like Prague – but it was really Oxfordshire!”, there are details on him building Scaramanga's Golden Gun and how Alka-Seltzer helped make model submarines look real. But there are also non-set anecdotes – like when he nearly died during a plane hijack in India – that make the book more than just a technical manual. **Russell Lewin**

i Lamont “played” Bond once – for a few seconds in *Thunderball*, when he doubled for Connery in an underwater sequence.



## EURO GOTHIC

Scarier than Brexit



► **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

416 pages | Hardback

► Author **Jonathan Rigby**

► Publisher **Signum Books**

● Following 2000's *English Gothic* and 2007's *American Gothic*, horror maven Jonathan Rigby's latest surveys European horror cinema – and a strange, wild landscape it is, thanks to less restraint when it comes to sex and violence, and a disregard for logical plotting.

Rigby lavishes special attention on 113 titles, but also discusses general trends and other minor films. All the expected milestones are covered, with names like Bava, Argento, Franco and Fulci looming large, but he also shines a light on obscurities.

An erudite man, he's fond of using paintings or poems as reference points. He has a mellifluous prose style and a sophisticated vocabulary, replete with terms like “susurruration” and “stertorous”.

If there's a weakness it's the somewhat arbitrary nature of the book's parameters. An exclusive focus on France, Italy, Germany and Spain excludes gems like Czech film *Valerie And Her Week Of Wonders*. And the decision to close in 1983, on the basis that home video caused a drop in production, means deserving titles like *Demons* and *Anguish* lose out. All the same, this remains an essential purchase for anyone beguiled by European horror's unfettered, eroticised fever-dreams. **Ian Berriman**

i Also worth a read if you can track down a copy: Cathal Tohill and Pete Tombs's 1994 book *Immoral Tales*.

## BULLET TIME

A BOOK IN BULLET POINTS



## DOCTOR WHO: THE WHONIVERSE

► **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

320 pages | Hardback

► Authors **George Mann,**

**Justin Richards**

► Publisher **BBC Books**

● This one's ambitious – a book charting the total history of the *Doctor Who* universe, from the Big Bang to the end of time. That's 53 years of TV and untold billions of years of fictional reality. Whew.

● The trot through the Doctor's adventures is brisk to the point of remorselessness but it's fun seeing how the authors tie all the strands of chronology together.

● There are some wonderful, impressionistic illustrations – some concept art for the revived series, some new paintings of old series monsters. We particularly love a painting of the Cyber-King stomping through Victorian London.

● The book fudges the UNIT dating controversy (“the later years of the 20th century”). Wusses!

● Squishy vinyl cover. Nice.







## EVERY MOUNTAIN MADE LOW

She sees dead people



► **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

416 pages | Paperback/ebook

► Author Alex White

► Publisher Solaris

❖ **Basic social interaction** is governed by unspoken rules and body language cues that most of us take for granted, because we don't remember learning how they work. But for Loxley, who may be on the autistic spectrum (the word's never used in the book), tone of voice and facial expression are parts of a foreign language that she's spent years learning how to decipher, and that she has to work at every single day. Life would be complicated enough, frankly, if she hadn't also inherited the family knack of seeing – and being seen by – the ghosts of people who have died violent deaths.

Alex White handles his non-neurotypical protagonist with sensitivity rather than sensationalism; Loxley is smart, resourceful, creative, and more than the sum of her disability, although with everything she goes through it's a marvel she manages to keep going. The same can't quite be said of the world White builds around Loxley, a corporate-controlled industrial hellhole that Charles Dickens would find OTT, or his plot, which starts out as a sort of dystopian noir but makes repeated detours into sexual assault and Grand Guignol. Gripping but grim. **Nic Clarke**

**i** Alex White modelled Loxley's behaviour on that of the brown recluse spider, *Loxosceles reclusa* – hence the name!



## THE SMOKE HUNTER

Romancing The Jones



► **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

448 pages | Paperback/ebook

► Author Jacquelyn Benson

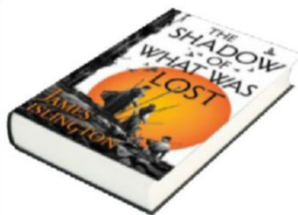
► Publisher Headline

❖ **Classic adventure stories** by the likes of H Rider Haggard and Edgar Wallace are problematic to say the least; nowadays the thrill of the tale tends to be spoiled by attitudes towards most people who are not white and/or male. *The Smoke Hunter* feels like an attempt to deliver those old-fashioned thrills in a more inclusive fashion.

A lot of this 1890s-set story feels very familiar. As suffragette rebel Eleanora Mallory heads into the Honduran jungle with rugged American Adam Bates, following a mysterious map, things feel rather *Romancing The Stone*. And Bates, who conceals a top-notch university education and expertise in Mayan history under that buff exterior, has more than a whiff of Indiana Jones about him.

The PC side of things isn't over-laboured, and the adventure is great fun, with such genre staples as lethal obstacles to overcome, bloodthirsty animals, and an entertainingly hostile environment (entertaining for the readers, that is). The main problem is, it's more *Kingdom Of The Crystal Skull* than *Raiders Of The Lost Ark*. Enjoyable enough, but not captivating. **Miriam McDonald**

**i** Jacquelyn Benson began writing her first novel aged 15, but kept abandoning books a few chapters in.



## THE SHADOW OF WHAT WAS LOST

Time Lord Of The Rings



► **RELEASED 10 NOVEMBER**

704 pages | Hardback/ebook

► Author James Islington

► Publisher Orbit

❖ **In many respects** *The Shadow Of What Was Lost* is a traditional coming-of-age, saving-the-world epic fantasy, in the vein of Tad Williams and Raymond E Feist (and yes, Robert Jordan). But it also has the flavour of something new, mostly due to its intriguing use of various magical abilities, including time travel.

Previously self-published, the book has gone through a quick edit with Orbit and come out looking shinier. That's not to say it doesn't have its faults, however. The book hops around from major event to major event, feeling a little rushed, and yet still runs to just over 700 pages.

The characters are a familiar but loveable bunch: Davian with his prodigious latent magic; Wirr with his affable nobility. Most of all, Asha stands out. Tough, level-headed and pragmatic, she's a bit of a badass in training.

The overarching story can be frustratingly vague as the plots within plots are teased out, but this does have the desired effect of keeping you hooked, so can be forgiven. Hooked enough, even, that at the end of the book you'll be left wanting more – if only to explain what the hell is going on... **Eridie Roman**

**i** The origin of Princess Karaliene's name won't need any explanation if you're Latvian – it translates as "queen".

## REISSUES

Pick of the paperbacks this month: Tricia Sullivan's **OCCUPY ME** (★★★★★, 10 November, Gollancz). It



centres on Pearl, an angel with wings that exist in another dimension, who wakes up in a tip with no memory of how she got there, finds work with a secretive organisation, and is pulled into a conspiracy involving big oil, time travel, and a mysterious briefcase. We said: "Sullivan has a talent for describing things in unusual ways, and the characters are a great strength. But the story is confusing, confused and oftentimes garbled." Set six years before *The Force Awakens*, the events of **STAR WARS: BLOODLINE** (★★★★★, 1 December, Arrow) are integral to



the new mythology. Centring on Leia, Claudia Gray's tie-in reveals plenty about how a foundering New Republic spawned both the First Order and the Resistance. We said: "A cracking political thriller ... Should probably be considered essential reading for any fan." Finally, John Connolly's publishers are marking the tenth anniversary of **THE BOOK OF LOST THINGS** (out now, Hodder & Stoughton) with a limited



edition hardback that includes two bonus short stories, handsome illustrations, and an afterword by the author. Set in 1939, it puts a perverse spin on childhood favourites, as 12-year-old David quests through a land of myths and fairytales in search of the titular book. Featuring half-wolf/half-human "Loups", screeching harpies and Communist dwarves, it's grim fare, decidedly *not* for kids.



## BOOKS



### ALIENS: SCIENCE ASKS...

ET essays



▶ **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

224 pages | Paperback/ebook

▶ Editor Jim Al-Khalili

▶ Publisher Profile Books

❖ **This collection's full title** continues *Is There Anyone Out There?* and (spoilers!) the answer is a hesitant "no". Intelligent extraterrestrials are unlikely to exist, or they'll be so different from us that we'll struggle to recognise them.

There are 19 essays here, but if you're hoping for sensational UFO stories there's just one Roswell- and Area 51-filled chapter by Dallas Campbell to keep you entertained. Otherwise brace yourself for SETI statistics, the Fermi paradox, cellular chemistry and Mars' hostile environment.

Two chapters are of particular interest to SF fans. Ian Stewart recounts the best examples of aliens in literature: it's a solid introduction to mainstays like Clarke and Heinlein, although fresher references are rare, limited to Stephen Baxter and Orson Scott Card. Meanwhile, in a snarky highlight of the book, Adam Rutherford tackles movie monsters, pummelling the likes of *Avatar* ("a tiresome lack of imagination") and *Prometheus* ("wrong from the very first frame") across nine pages. Without Campbell, Stewart and Rutherford it would be a phlegmatic assortment: worthy, informative but inconclusive and, ahem, lifeless. **Dave Bradley**

**i** There was a 19th century prize for first alien contact. Martians were excluded – for being too easy!



### TIM BURTON: THE ICONIC FILMMAKER AND HIS WORK

Not sleepy, but a bit hollow



▶ **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

176 pages | Hardback

▶ Author Ian Nathan

▶ Publisher Aurum

❖ **Does being a fan of** something make you less critical of it, or more? It's a pertinent question where this book is concerned. A lavishly presented survey of Tim Burton's CV, it features hundreds of colour photographs, and feels very much designed as a gift for the Burton fan in your life. Some of the images are oddly chosen – what value does the poster for *Superman: The Movie* add? – but mostly, it looks splendid.

Given a limited wordcount (more than half the book is pictures), Ian Nathan crams in a lot as he rattles through Burton's career. However, the tone is often too gushing, too eager to laud Burton's genius. Maybe some fans want this – but being a fan also means you've thought about the subject a lot, and the book could use a more considered approach. In a way, it underrates Burton: he has glaring shortcomings, which even he doesn't deny, but which this book barely addresses. The fact he's become a leading filmmaker in spite of this is the real testament to him: you have to take his flaws, because what else he offers is unique. **Eddie Robson**

**i** Burton was at CalArts with Pixar's John Lasseter – a connection which got *Frankenweenie* greenlit.



### ANGELS OF MUSIC

Newman, old characters



▶ **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

405 pages | Paperback/ebook

▶ Author Kim Newman

▶ Publisher Titan Books

❖ **In many way, *Angels Of Music*** is classic Kim Newman: a melange of fictional characters, and a story composed of a series of shorter stories building up to a climax. Because of the way it ranges through time, it's probably most akin to 2000's *Seven Stars* in that respect.

It's set in Paris, with Erik, the opera ghost, running his own agency, a sort of Edwardian/Victorian Charlie's Angels. There are always three Angels, and over time they are replaced – and so in each story, a different trio of Angels takes the lead. It gives Newman a chance to weave fictional characters, both forgotten and still-recognised, into his narrative. The time frame is one that Newman seems to excel at depicting, and there's a sense of fluidity and fun that makes the story really enjoyable. What's more, the ending is solid, and feels satisfying too (unlike that of *Johnny Alucard*).

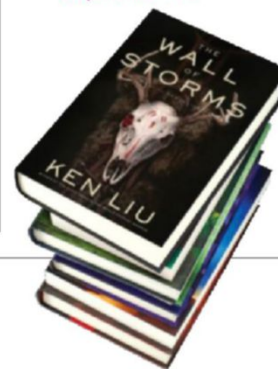
If there's one thing that's slightly disappointing, it's the return of very familiar Newman characters at the heart of the action. It's not that Kate Reed and Genevieve Dieudonne are bad characters, far from it, but it's a delight to see him playing with new-old characters instead. But that's a small gripe, and many Newman fans will see it as a plus point anyhow.

**Miriam McDonald**

**i** The falling chandelier in *Phantom Of The Opera* was inspired by a real-life death at Paris's Palais Garnier.

## ALSO OUT

As ever, there's a broad field of other books out. It'd be remiss not to flag **EUROPE IN WINTER** (out now, Solaris), third in Dave Hutchinson's Awards-nomination-hoovering *Fractured Europe Sequence*, or Ken Liu's **THE WALL OF STORMS** (out now, Head Of Zeus), book two of his *Dandelion Dynasty* series. Sadly we were unable to bring you reviews of Mark Frost's **THE SECRET HISTORY OF TWIN PEAKS** (out now, Macmillan) or *Rogue One* tie-in **STAR WARS: CATALYST** (17 November, Century) due to stern embargoes – but we will next issue! Readers with superhero-mad nippers should check out **IRON MAN: THE GAUNTLET** (out now, Egmont) by *Artemis Fowl* author Eoin Colfer, first in a new Marvel Fiction range suitable for ages eight and up. Turning to non-fiction, you'll need sturdy shelving and a healthy bank balance to buy **THE STAR TREK ENCYCLOPEDIA** (out now, Harper Design) – boosted with 300 pages of new entries since 1999's third edition, it now stretches to two volumes. Finally, three other books which all received glowing reviews in these pages have also had the update treatment. **THE ART OF HAMMER** (out now, Titan Books) now has posters for Hammer productions released since 2010. **THE HAMMER VAULT** (out now, Titan Books) features new information on the horror studio's pre-1979 releases as well as those of the revived brand. And **THE MARVEL VAULT** (19 November, Titan Books), first released in 2006, uses 16 extra pages to cover the last decade's developments. Phew!



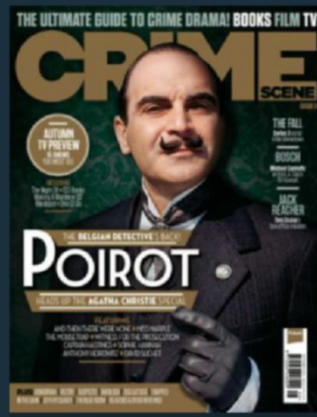


**SAVE**  
UP TO **63%**  
FROM £ **3.75**  
JUST



# A GREAT GIFT FOR EVERYONE

Treat yourself or a loved one this year with a magazine subscription



- Choose from a **huge range of titles**
- Save up to **63%** off the cover price
- Subscribe from just **£3.75** every 3 months
- **Free personalised gift card** when buying for someone else

## 2 EASY WAYS TO ORDER

 **VISIT** [myfavouritemagazines.co.uk/Z704](http://myfavouritemagazines.co.uk/Z704)

 **OR CALL US ON** 0344 848 2852

Please quote **Z704** when ordering by phone.

Lines are open Monday to Friday 8am to 7pm and Saturday 10am to 2pm (GMT).



Savings calculated against the full RRP (single issue price x frequency). This offer is for new subscribers only. Full details of the Direct Debit guarantee are available upon request. You can write to us or call us to cancel your subscription within 14 days of purchase. Your subscription is for the minimum term specified and will expire at the end of the current term. Payment is non-refundable after the 14 day cancellation period unless exceptional circumstances apply. Your statutory rights are not affected. Prices correct at point of print and subject to change. For full terms and conditions please visit: [myfavm.ag/magterms](http://myfavm.ag/magterms). Offer ends: 31st January 2017.

**Future** myfavouritemagazines  
Official Magazine Subscription Store



## ALL-STAR BATMAN

Mad Bats



★★★★★

► **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

► Publisher **DC Comics**

► Writer **Scott Snyder**

► Artist **John Romita Jr**

**ISSUES 1-3** Thanks to the brilliant

*Rebirth*, there are a lot of Batman books on shelves right now – so many it can be tough to choose which one to buy. The main Batman book? *Justice League*? *Detective Comics*? Maybe one of the spin-offs. *Batman Beyond*? *Batman '66*? *Gotham Academy*? Actually, what about the villains? *Deathstroke*? *Harley Quinn*? *Catwoman*? You get the point. To buy them all, you'd need to take a second mortgage out on Wayne Manor.

Thank DC, then, for putting out *All-Star Batman*, which fulfils the promise of its title by putting

writer Scott Snyder and artist John Romita Jr together, allowing them to make full use of the enormous Gotham City sandbox. Snyder and Romita Jr are utilising so many characters it often feels like you're reading five books at once. Talk about value for money.

The genius premise of the first arc sees Harvey Dent (aka Two-Face) telling everyone in Gotham that he and Batman are going on a (trackable) road trip together. If they get where they're going, every dark secret of every Gotham resident will be uploaded online. If someone takes down Batman on the way, the killer will be rewarded with untold riches. Cue every villain Batman's ever faced trying to cash in.

It's a high concept worthy of a blockbuster movie, so it's extremely satisfying to see it play

out like one. Imagine *Mad Max: Fury Road* if it starred Batman with a chainsaw and you're about halfway to the entertainment levels reached in the first three issues. Snyder clearly has a well-worn Bat-villain encyclopaedia in his desk. It's the only way to explain the sight of the KGBeast facing off against the Royal Flush Gang (remember them?) for the right to kill Batman. It's a moment played for laughs, and it sure gets them.

But it's not all old news/characters. Snyder also incorporates the new Robin, Duke, into the narrative, revealing key character elements, and handing him some of the arc's funniest

“A high concept worthy of a movie”

lines (the bit involving his favourite band's name is worth the cover cost alone...).

This is an impossibly fun book, stuffed with stand-out moments. Every time you think the series has hit its peak, it surprises you with a new Bat-gadget, obscure villain or hilarious one-liner from a Batman who's half-grumpy, half-smug, and all snark. As you'd expect given the premise, there's a lot of well-choreographed action, but Snyder also finds time for quieter flashback moments, which go deep into Bruce and Harvey's relationship/backstory, all beautifully rendered in watercolours by Romita Jr.

So, if you only buy one Batman book, buy *All-Star Batman*. Because it's basically all of them.

Sam Ashurst

**i** Snyder says we can expect *All-Star's* pace to increase when it gets towards the end: "It kind of careens towards a cliff."



He regretted buying the Trump glove.

## DAN DARE: THE 2000 AD YEARS

Volume Two

Claw and order

★★★★★

► **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

► Publisher **Rebellion**

► Writers/artists **Various**

**GRAPHIC NOVEL** “Burn, you devils!” That's the kind of interplanetary diplomacy displayed in this concluding collection of Dan Dare's punk-era adventures. And that's on a good day.

Comic book classicists may have shared such sentiments, seeing Frank Hampson's clean-cut star pilot reborn as a blaster-happy tough nut. But for all that these *2000 AD* stories stamp on the postwar decency of *Eagle* they're enduringly thrilling, pushing each page to the absolute limit of imagination and incident.

The first half wraps up the *Legion Of The Lost Worlds* saga (imagine *Inglorious Basterds* glassing *Star Trek* in a pub ruck), pitting Dare against deadly doppelgangers, space worms and sub-aquatic Lovecraftian horrors. This run showcases some of the most dynamic work of Dave Gibbons's career.

Dare's revamped again in the final arc, rigged out in a Captain Marvel-style costume and given a Cosmic Claw, no less. You feel the character detaching forever from his '50s origins – but also a pang that the strip, abruptly axed (thanks a lot, Tharg!), had the simple dignity of an ending stolen from it. **Nick Setchfield**

**i** The *2000 AD* strip was meant to end with their version of Dare cancelling his own existence in a time warp.



Looks like everybody's going through a purple patch.





Not likely to forgive your debts, then.

## THE BLACK MONDAY MURDERS

Blood Money



► **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

► Publisher **Image Comics**  
► Writer **Jonathan Hickman**  
► Artist **Tomm Coker**

**ISSUES 1-3** If you want a slow-burning, intricately constructed comic-book epic, call Jonathan Hickman. From his runs on *Fantastic Four* and *Avengers* to comics like *The Manhattan Projects* and *East Of West*, Hickman specialises in writing dense, fiercely imaginative sagas, and his latest ongoing series is no exception.

The central concept of *The Black Monday Murders* is that all the world's major banking organisations are also secret occult societies that have been manipulating humanity for thousands of years. A murder on Wall Street pulls a police detective into an increasingly dark and twisted investigation, and the series is soon mixing a gripping mystery with some fascinating worldbuilding.

Hickman has often played with the idea of an elite that controls the world, but this particular take feels especially resonant. Much of the story's background is delivered through extra pages of text and diagrams – these first three issues all weigh in at over 50 pages. Meanwhile Tomm Coker's photo-real artwork gives the series a shadowy, noir-esque atmosphere. This complex, demanding comic is one of 2016's most impressive and intriguing debuts. **Saxon Bullock**

**i** Hickman has another ongoing series starting in November – dark SF saga *Frontier*, which he's illustrating himself.



He didn't take kindly to delayed flights.

## ARCHANGEL

Split the difference



► **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

► Publisher **IDW Publishing**  
► Writer **William Gibson**  
► Artist **Butch Guice**

**ISSUES 1-3** After years of lurking on the fringes of the genre, cyberpunk creator William Gibson is continuing his return to full-on sci-fi. Following up his 2014 novel *The Peripheral*, *Archangel* sees Gibson making his first entry into the world of comics, bringing us a five-issue SF thriller that deals in time travel and multiple realities.

The story starts in a dystopian version of 2016 where the corrupt US Vice President Junior Henderson uses a device known as the "Splitter" to create an alternate timeline from 1945 onwards. Henderson infiltrates the alternate timeline in 1945, aiming to sculpt 20th century history to

his own whims – but a group of rebel soldiers from 2016 are on his trail and trying to stop him...

Three issues in, *Archangel* is an action thriller that leans heavily into pulpy '40s intrigue, showcasing crisp dialogue and gnarly SF concepts. The art from Butch Guice is well-crafted and atmospheric, pulling off vivid moments of action, and if these three issues were the opening to an ongoing series, they'd be an intriguing if occasionally unfocused start.

As a self-contained miniseries, however, things are different – we're past the halfway point, and despite an attention-grabbing central concept, Gibson's script struggles to make the characters register. The pacing is also rather haphazard, and it feels like too much story is being crammed into too small a space. *Archangel* had the potential to be genuinely fascinating, but the end result plays more like a choppy, abridged version of a screenplay than a satisfying story in its own right.

**Saxon Bullock**

“Showcases crisp dialogue and gnarly SF concepts”

**i** *Archangel* was originally created by Gibson and actor/writer Michael St John Smith as a potential TV series.



The goat had definitely had better days.

## ALEISTER & ADOLF

Sign O' The Times



► **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

► Publisher **Dark Horse Comics**  
► Writer **Douglas Rushkoff**  
► Artist **Michael Avon Oeming**

**GRAPHIC NOVEL** You might have thought it was the combined might of the Allied Forces that won WW2, but according to this tale it was actually the sexually-charged black magic rituals of notorious English occultist Aleister Crowley.

While that might seem far-fetched, much of what happens here is based on fact: Crowley really did design sigils for British intelligence, and Churchill's V for Victory salute was also his handiwork. Incorporating several historical figures, Douglas Rushkoff cleverly weaves real-life events such as Rudolf Hess's defection into the unfolding narrative – though, despite the title, the Führer himself remains a distant presence.

Opting for evocative grey washes for the more phantasmagorical moments, Oeming's sleek cartooning is strikingly presented in black and white, while his depiction of Crowley eerily captures the essence of the man himself.

Rushkoff contrasts the '40s narrative with a framing story about a web developer discovering the sinister reasons behind some disappearing logos. After this fascinating read, you'll never look at a corporate insignia the same way again. **Stephen Jewell**

**i** Oeming plans to burn his original cover art, as he doesn't want it to fall into the hands of "some Hitler lover".



## GEARS OF WAR 4

### Rising like a Fenix from the ashes



► **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

► Reviewed on XO

► Also on PC

► Publisher Microsoft Studios

**VIDEOGAME** Handing control of an established franchise to a new developer is a risky business. After all, it was Epic Games that created Marcus Fenix and the Locust Horde, partly as a playable advert for its Unreal Engine. Could another studio hope to capture the same blend of snappy shooting, muscular machismo and crisp cover-handling that defined the series? The Coalition's response is an enthusiastic "yes", and even though *Gears Of War 4* centres around an entirely new cast of characters, it feels immediately and gratifyingly familiar.

The opening act sees you at odds with the same Coalition of Ordered Governments (COG) that Fenix and Santiago once

served. The COG has gone all dystopian, enforcing a mandatory reproduction policy.

That's where Marcus's son, JD Fenix, comes in, fleeing the COG along with childhood friend Del. The opening act sees them raiding a deserted COG settlement.

It's only once you're out of the city that *Gears Of War 4* kicks off in earnest. A new and very slimy threat emerges, and quickly turns out to be even more similar to the Locust than the automated adversaries introduced in the first act. In dire need of assistance, you make a mad dash to JD's family estate in search of the muscle-bound curmudgeon that is Marcus Fenix. It's at this point *Gears Of War 4* transitions from visually impressive to simply spectacular. The third act in particular features some of the most breathtaking environmental art in the medium.

This is a supremely competent game, but not always a confident

“Feels immediately and gratifyingly familiar”

one. There's a level of respect for the original trilogy that borders on deference. The spectre of the Locust War looms, both in the sense of the narrative shadow it casts and the developer's reluctance to stray too far from established enemy types. For all its successes in terms of pacing, artistry and game feel, this campaign all too often comes across as a little bit safe. *Gears Of War 4* is meticulously crafted, but what it lacks, unfortunately, is that spark of inspiration. Marcus Fenix may have passed the torch on to JD, but the question is whether or not the son will ever be able to fully escape the anxiety of his father's influence. **James Nouch**

**i** Maintaining a running joke, a fourth Carmine brother kicks the bucket. He turns up in act one, chapter four, in a guard tower.



Would you steal a coat from this man?

## HOW THE MARQUIS GOT HIS COAT BACK

Return to London Below



► **RELEASED 10 NOVEMBER (CD) / OUT NOW! (IPLAYER)**

44 minutes | Radio broadcast/CD

► Publisher Radio 4/BBC Audio

**AUDIO DRAMA** Three years after Radio 4's adaptation of *Neverwhere*, Dirk Maggs brings us this sequel, based on Neil Gaiman's short story follow-up to the original tale. Gaiman's lyrical writing seems ideally suited to radio, and this enjoyable yarn is no exception.

As with *Neverwhere*, we are quickly plunged into the world of London Below as the eponymous Marquis de Carabas attempts to track down his coat, stolen from him when he was temporarily deceased. This time we meet the Elephant, of Elephant & Castle, along with the somewhat damp Mushroom People and the shepherds of Shepherd's Bush, and learn just how the Marquis came to bear a name more commonly associated with *Puss In Boots*.

The casting mixes up different versions of the universe, uniting original TV Marquis Paterson Joseph – excellent in his return to the role – with Bernard Cribbins and James McAvoy from the previous radio play. It's a slight tale and one that does assume you'll already be familiar with *Neverwhere*, but this is still a pitch-perfect production Gaiman fans won't want to miss. **Rhian Drinkwater**

**i** Gaiman's *Stardust* is coming to Radio 4 in December, as a two-part drama with Matthew Beard and Sophie Rundle.



Shots in the dark.





## THE TORCHWOOD ARCHIVE

Hub-y birthday



► **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

120 minutes | CD/download

► Publisher **Big Finish**

**AUDIO DRAMA** *The Who* universe loves a birthday knees-up, but Big Finish's celebration of 10 years of *Torchwood* takes a fresh approach to anniversary reunions, wisely leaving *The Three Captain Jacks* to slash fic writers.

Instead, *The Torchwood Archive* is a millennia-spanning anthology that transports us from the foo-fighting outfit's early days under Queen Victoria to the distant future, where its history is preserved in a digital storage facility on a remote asteroid.

Recorded piecemeal over many months, it's like a *Torchwood* Cassettebox mash-up, featuring most of the key players from the past decade, including Eve Myles, Gareth David-Lloyd, Naoko Mori, Indira Varma and, of course, John Barrowman.

James Goss skillfully assembles all the jigsaw pieces into a coherent narrative that's true to *Torchwood*'s batty blend of sci-fi and salty Welsh humour (one story involves a factory full of blow-up alien sex dolls – well of course). Despite much of the heavy lifting being done by new characters, it's a fun ride that, by *literally* being all over the place, serves as a fitting tribute to the glorious, bewildering madness that is *Torchwood*. **Paul Kirkley**

**i** Also out: four-disc release *Torchwood: Outbreak*, in which an alien virus gets loose on the streets of Cardiff.



## BATMAN: ARKHAM VR

Strap on the utility belt!



► **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

► Reviewed on PS4

► Publisher **Warner Bros**

**VIDEOGAME** *Rocksteady's Arkham* series has always done right by the Caped Crusader. The British studio just understands what makes Batman tick. So for the same team to helm a VR experience that literally lets you look down and see a utility belt around your waist is a Bat-dream come true.

Put simply, you are Batman. From chatting with Alfred, to descending into the Batcave, to admiring your chiselled jaw in the mirror, *Arkham VR* wires you straight into the Dark Knight's brain. Suiting up is worth the price of admission alone and by the time you're testing out your Batarangs, you'll be fully immersed. But this isn't just a dressing sim, you're the World's Greatest Detective and there's a case to solve. There's no brawling or Batmobile chases here, but there are puzzles to solve and some especially satisfying uses

of the "forensic scanner". The story itself is only an hour long, but is executed perfectly, with a dramatic conclusion showing just how powerful virtual reality can be when combined with a studio at the very top of its game.

And there's plenty to do once the credits roll. The Riddler arrives to paint fiendish question marks and arrows all over levels, and there's a host of puzzling to do. Even ignoring the green-clad one's mindbending games, the Batcave is a treasure trove of bonus content. Here you can wield weapons from the first three games, tune into the GCPD police scanner, and study life-sized, moving recreations of infamous heroes and villains. All this plus the ability to grapple through the Batcave while winged rodents squeal as they fly past. As VR "experiences" go, this is, like Batman himself, hard to beat.

**Louise Blain**

**i** Rocksteady's Sefton Hill says the game got DC's President quite emotional. "Geoff Johns was just like, swearing!"



## UNTIL DAWN: RUSH OF BLOOD

Terror Train



► **RELEASED OUT NOW!**

► Reviewed on PS4

► Publisher **Sony**

**VIDEOGAME** *Virtual reality* is simultaneously the best and worst thing to happen to horror gaming. On the one hand, it means you can pop on a headset and immerse yourself in terrifying worlds handcrafted by developers; but on the other, why on earth would you want to do that?

Spinning-off from last year's PS4-exclusive original, this gory helping of *Until Dawn* changes tactics from a choose your own scare-venture to an on-rails ghost train with pistols. Don't let that put you off though – *Rush Of Blood* is a truly horrifying jaunt into madness.

It doesn't matter what you're afraid of, there's something here to frighten: cackling clowns, frozen mannequins that come to life, enormous spiders, and even a darkened abattoir full of pig corpses that just won't stay dead.

This is a new level of frights in horror gaming. The developers know what makes you tick in VR, understanding that leaving the inside of your minecart empty for the majority of the game will make it even worse when things creep in alongside you. Yes, the last level descends into Z-list horror, but this is the scare game to beat on PS VR. Be afraid. Be very afraid. **Louise Blain**

**i** The sound of rushing wind as the ride hurtles along was made by blowing into a mike, then modulating the recording.





## COLLECTABLES

What we've been playing with this month

**1** Having a coffee morning with four pals? Then why not match up their personalities with these five **Star Wars Pop! Home mugs** (FPI price £12.99 each; product codes F4261, F4262, F4263, F4264, F4265)? Darth Vader for the grumpy one, BB-8 for the cute one, Stormtrooper for the mean but clumsy one, Boba Fett for the, er,

cunning assassin one, and Chewbacca for... wait a minute! This Chewbacca looks like an Ewok! What's with those cute eyes? This causes chaos! Look, just get three friends round, not four.

**2** Like the fact that practically everything with "Trump" plastered on it is knocked out in the Far East, there's

something ironic about this **Captain America character mug** (FPI price £8.99; product code F2154) bearing the legend "Made in China". Hand-painted – by some pretty uninterested employees, judging by the not-exactly-Rembrandt-level quality brushwork – it may look wee compared to the other mugs on these pages, but is actually the

perfect size for a regular-sized dose of PG Tips. We tested this by decanting water into it and everything! This is why we get paid the big bucks, folks.

**3** Let's face it, criminal psychosis isn't so cute. But one look at this range of **Suicide Squad Metals die-fast figures** (FPI price £10.99 each; product codes F3569, F3623, F3624, F3625, F3626) will melt your moral objections. The line-up includes Killer Croc, a masked Deadshot (doubtlessly cheaper than the rights to Will Smith's mush) and Harley Quinn, complete with outsize baseball bat for those oh-so-adorable acts of grievous bodily harm. Jared Leto's



All products are available at

**forbiddenplanet**  
international  
home shopping

www.forbiddenplanet.co.uk  
01621 877 222

# Reviews



sleazeball crime clown is available in two variants. They all have swivelling hips, the minxes.

**4** Pay tribute to the Ancient One with this hand-painted resin figure of the squid-faced geezer. It's nicely detailed and heavy enough to bash any unwanted cultists on the bonce. It's just part of a **Cthulhu the Ancient One tribute box** (FPI price £11.24; product code C9769) which also includes a book on Cthulhu lore. The essay in this is good, but the book is padded with pages on Metallica's *Ride The Lightning* album cover (because of the song "Call Of Ktulu") and two pages on @WstonesOxfordSt's Twitter account...

**5** Spare a thought for this **ThunderCats Mega Scale Lion-O** (FPI price £34.99; product code D5362) – the poor bugger's been sentenced to a lifetime imprisoned in a display box with "cute" sidekick Snarf. Luckily, the lord of the ThunderCats has some toys to help him occupy the time, namely a Claw Shield, and not one but two Swords of Omens – one version in its closed-eye stumpy version, the other eye-open and extended. ThunderChum Tygra is also available – he comes with a bolo whip and crucially, no Snarf.

**6** It may feel like there's nothing left that hasn't yet been turned into a Funko

Pop! figure, but we've thought of a few gaps in the market. There's still room for dictator, serial killer and personification of abstract concept ranges, allowing you to buy cutesy plastic simulacra of Pol Pot, Jeffrey Dahmer and Ennui. After that, the next logical step is Funko Pops of all seven billion people on the planet. Plus variants with all seven billion wearing different jumpers. Anyway, here's **Scott Pilgrim vs The World Pop! vinyl figures** (FPI price £8.69 each; product codes F3242, F3243, F3244) of Scott, Ramona Flowers and Knives Chau. May their Smartie-eyed fizzogs distract you from the ceaseless background hum of the grinding death engines of capitalism for a few seconds. ●

## THINGS TO COME

More goodies on their way soon



ETA  
JANUARY  
EXPECT TO PAY  
**£250**

### 1:6 DEATH TROOPER

◆ High-end figure specialists Hot Toys are planning four designs based on *Rogue One*. First up: this Death Trooper, complete with nine interchangeable hands. Expect Shoretrooper and Vader figures in April, and a TIE Pilot in September.



ETA  
FEBRUARY  
EXPECT TO PAY  
**£25 EACH**

### PREACHER FIGURES

◆ Merch for the AMC show is thin on the ground so far, so we're pleased to see NECA are bringing out 7" figures of the titular Jesse Custer and his vampire pal Cassidy. Each comes with ickie accessories like a bible and some booze.



ETA  
MAY  
EXPECT TO PAY  
**£60**

### SPIDER-GWEN STATUE

◆ We're getting a sympathetic twinge just looking at the "extreme crouch" pose on this – if we tried it, something would *definitely* go twang. Standing 3½ inches tall, it has magnets in the feet to keep Gwen stable on its base. Ain't science ace?

Photography by Olly Curtis





SERIES XI

## RED DWARF

Older but certainly no wiser

▶ UK Broadcast Dave, finished

▶ US Broadcast TBC

▶ Episodes Reviewed 11.01-11.06

🔴 **The show may be set three million years in the future but somehow it always feels like 1988 aboard *Red Dwarf*. Oddly, this is no bad thing. The show's been through its big FX, no-audience-laughter and faux-film-look periods, but now it's being made by digital channel Dave on a budget that probably wouldn't cover Jim Parsons' geeky t-shirt allowance on *The Big Bang Theory*, and it's as healthy as ever... despite the extra few inches round the**

collective waists of its stars.

Some fans might snort with derision at a statement like that, and true, there's nothing of the stand-out quality of "Back To Reality", "Future Echoes" or "Queeg" in *Red Dwarf XI*, but those are three episodes out of 51 of the original BBC series. There may not be an out-and-out classic here – though a couple of episodes come close – but neither is there a complete clunker; you could even make a decent argument that all six episodes of series XI are better than any in seasons seven and eight.

The crucial question, though, is

how does series XI compare with season X, the first "proper" Dave series ("Back To Earth" doesn't count because, well, nobody really *wants* it to count). Series X was a revelation. Nobody expected it to be much cop; it proved everybody wrong by feeling confident, brash and bursting with bizarre comedy sci-fi concepts that felt as fresh as ever. The stars looked like they were really enjoying themselves, and the gags were often very sharp indeed. It was a return to basics – four misfit losers stuck together on a giant spaceship, usually spending at least half of each episode talking irrelevant bollocks, all in front of a live studio audience. It was cheap but it was incredibly cheerful.

Could XI keep up the standard? Well, very, very nearly, and we'll settle for that. If there's any slight degradation it isn't in the scripts so much as the staging.

### ZOOM IN



#### BEST EPISODE ▲

→ "Krysis" (11.05): The universe is suffering a midlife crisis; it's the best *Hitchhiker's* gag *Hitchhiker's* never did.

#### DID YOU SPOT?

→ There's a new sign on Starbug saying "Not Alert", presumably a reference to the classic "changing the light bulb" gag.

#### MOST RED DWARFY GAG

→ "Have no fear sir. I only trashed information I considered frivolous and idiotic." "Without checking with me first?" "And you are?"

#### STANDOUT GUEST STAR

→ Snacky the snack dispenser and his amazing psychotherapy skills in "Give And Take" (11.03). Is his egg-flipper antenna a gag at the expense of the Daleks' egg whisk guns?

#### BEST MOMENT ▼

→ The multiple Rimmers in the officers' mess in "Officer Rimmer" (11.04) are brilliantly realised, helped by great performances from Chris Barrie. The snooty waiter Rimmer is brilliant.

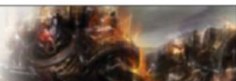




In association with

TALES OF WAR FROM THE GRIM  
DARKNESS OF THE FAR FUTURE

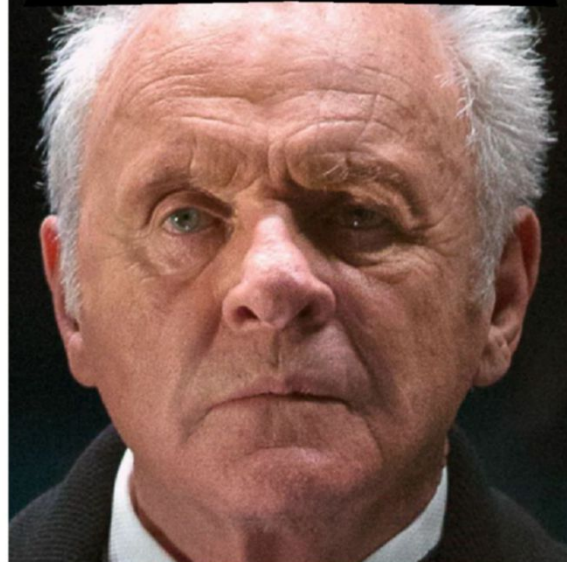
blacklibrary.com



# Viewscreen

## ★ BEST IN SHOW ★

The characters who make TV great



## DR ROBERT FORD

It's *Westworld*'s very own Steven Moffat  
— or is it George Lucas?

► UK Broadcast Sky Atlantic ► US Broadcast HBO

More think-piece than TV show, *Westworld* is the drama of our times; an obsessively self-analysing, post-postmodern dissection of TV and the discussion of TV – a HBO show about HBO shows. Which makes Dr Robert Ford, the creative director of the world's most elaborate LARP, an allegory for the modern showrunner.

Frustrated, world-weary and wise, Anthony Hopkins's Ford could be any big-time creative in television. He could be Steven Moffat. He could be Bryan Fuller. He could be David Benioff and DB Weiss. He is the reason why *Westworld* works, because he "gets" it in a way others can't. You see this early in the series, when "narrative director" Lee pitches Ford a new storyline – an outrageous adventure filled with cheap shocks and thrills. Ford savages it. "The guests don't return for the obvious things we do," he says, "they come back

because of the subtleties." He then unveils a huge storyline of his own.

This is where Ford gets fascinating; as *Westworld* begins to explore the relationship between creator and corporate. For Ford's new idea is weird and expensive, and the board (the network) is worried. He has a meeting with Theresa, the park's operations leader (meddling exec), who tells him their concern. Ford remains stubborn, reaffirming his creative control by dramatically stopping all near-by hosts.

It's the story we've heard before: an old, beloved creator – the reason for a franchise's success – either falling foul of corporate interests or, as may be the case with Ford, losing touch with what made their creation so special in the first place. In the real world he could be Gene Roddenberry. He could be George Lucas.

Stephen Kelly



Rimmer: smartie pants (and top).

Occasionally great gags are scuppered by odd editing choices, slightly off timing or performances that have a "not-enough-time-in-rehearsal" feel. You have to wonder if writer/director Doug Naylor relies a little too much on the well-established chemistry and comedy of Chris Barrie, Craig Charles, Danny John-Jules and Robert Llewellyn to try to paper over some cracks, but some scenes simply end up with a slightly seat-of-the-pants feel.

It's not a fatal flaw, though, because mostly the scripts shine through. Sure, there's a slight recycling of ideas (the scripts even often draw attention to the fact with exposition along the lines of, "This is like that thing we encountered in such and such an episode") and there's little of the sense of grudging camaraderie and human connection that defined the earlier seasons (everyone just hates each other now, pretty much) but the bottom line is: it's often very, very funny.

"Krysis" is the high point, with Kryten's red sports car makeover

“The bottom line is: it's often very, very funny”

and a phone call to a universe having a mid-life crisis. But "Officer Rimmer" isn't far behind – any episode that gives Barrie multiple roles to play is a winner, but this also boasts printer-jam Xerox man; a truly brilliant concept. "Twentica"'s conceit of a world where scientific advancement is illegal is brilliantly explored ("I don't do the Bang Bang," says a physicist-cum-flapper girl), while the saga of Lister's missing kidneys ends up as the unlikeliest excuse for time travel ever in "Give And Take".

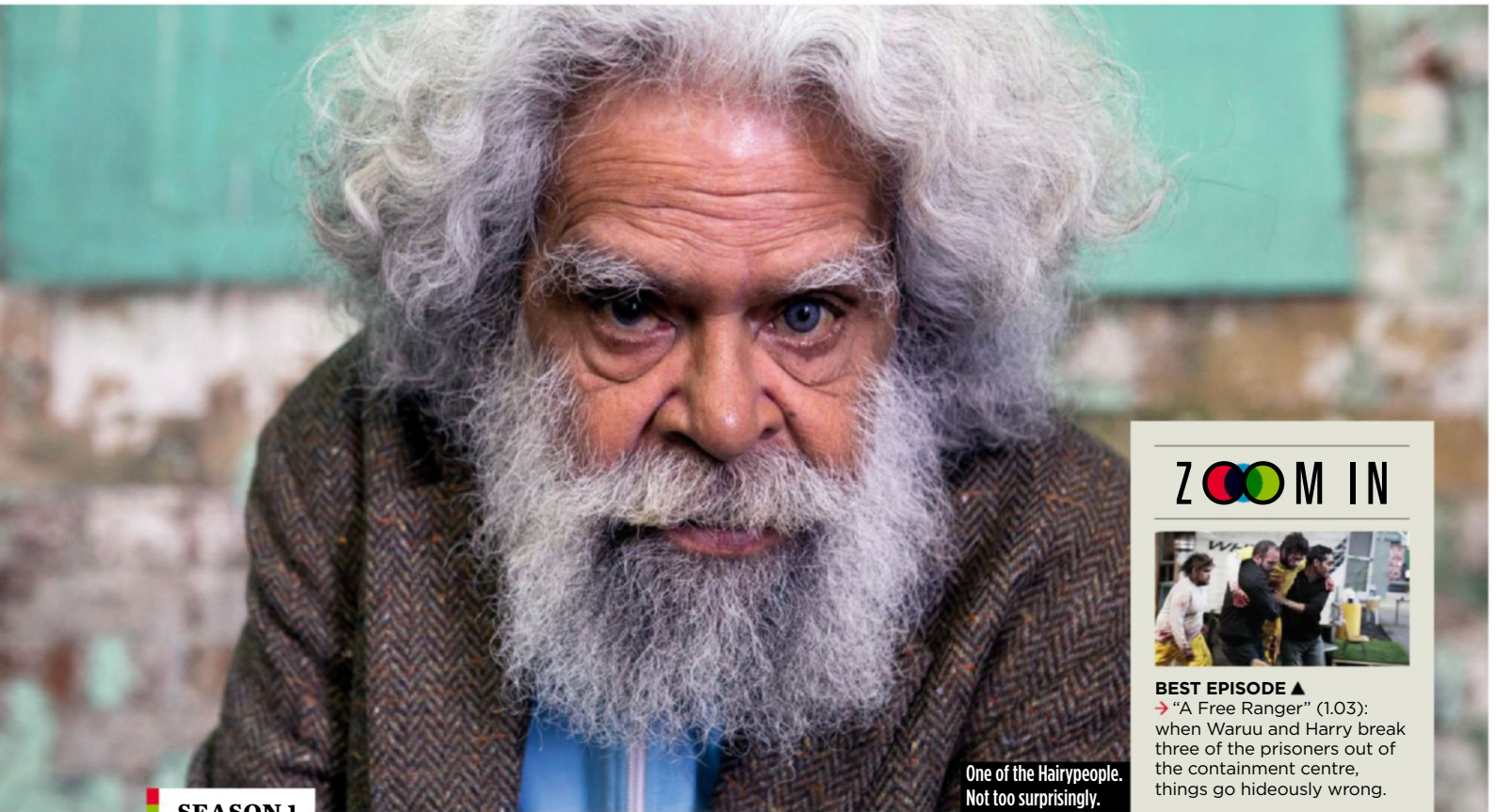
So, yeah, it's creaky at times, but *Red Dwarf* is still a blast.

Dave Golder



Was this scene directed by Nicolas Winding Refn...?





One of the Hairypeople.  
Not too surprisingly.

SEASON 1

## CLEVERMAN

Australian dystopia gets very hairy. Literally

► **UK Broadcast** BBC Three, finished  
► **Australia Broadcast** ABC, finished  
► **Episodes Reviewed** 1.01-1.06

❗ **Rather bizarrely, ignore all the swearing, gore and sex in *Cleverman*, and there's a really good idea for a new spin on the "chosen one" trope so popular in children's fantasy literature: what if the chosen was a complete loser? Because that's essentially what happens here.**

*Cleverman* is an Australian/New Zealand/American co-production – made and set in Australia – that, rather improbably (but surprisingly successfully), marries Aboriginal mythology with the dystopian genre. In a near-future Oz, a subsection of the Aborigines, the Hairypeople, have come out of hiding and are being treated as

subhumans, feared, detested and forced to live in a controlled zone. They're stronger, faster and, as the name suggests, a good deal hairier than us, and they have a mystical connection to the Dreamtime.

Waruu, a kind of militant leftie, runs the zone and fights for hairy rights. He expects to become the Cleverman, an aboriginal Shaman, but the current Cleverman, his Uncle Jimmy, gives his inheritance to Waruu's screw-up half-brother Koen. Koen doesn't want these powers and doesn't believe in the legends. But when something starts ripping the hearts out of humans and Hairypeople alike Waruu knows he must get Koen to step up to the mark.

Mixing in *Game Of Thrones'* Iain Glen as a dodgy media mogul, corrupt politicians and the spirit

of Dreamtime (or something), in a plot where everybody who isn't hairy is frankly vile to one another, this is conspiracy drama meets racism allegory – it's full of great ideas, compelling performances and hard-hitting moments. What it doesn't have is much of a story. It presents itself as a miniseries but ends on a cliffhanger, with enough dangling threads to recreate the Bayeux Tapestry.

Possibly it's aiming to be enigmatic but it simply ends up sprawling, vague and unsatisfying. It is grown up but it's not necessarily clever. Also Weta's Hairypeople make-up is pure *Carry On Screaming*.

But while it may not be the most coherent of shows, at heart there are some interesting themes and world-building going on. **Dave Golder**

### ZOOM IN



#### BEST EPISODE ▲

→ "A Free Ranger" (1.03): when Waruu and Harry break three of the prisoners out of the containment centre, things go hideously wrong.

#### TRIVIA

→ The Cleverman is part of Aboriginal mythology. Series creator Ryan Griffen describes him as "like the Pope of the Dreamtime... the conduit between the present and the Dreaming".

#### DID YOU SPOT?

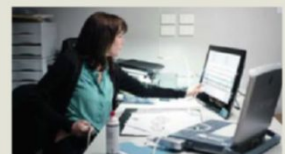
→ Okay, we *think* this is deliberate black humour... Ash is reduced to ashes, and Blair, carrying her ashes, tells Aunty Linda, "This is Ash."

#### BEST MOMENT

→ The scene in which Blair lays into Koen for being a self-seeking git and Kora, who doesn't speak English, keeps calling him an "arse".

#### NITPICK ▼

→ One of the show's few missteps is having the character who's artificially inseminated be a doctor; how come she doesn't work out something's seriously wrong with the pregnancy?







# SPURIOUS AWARDS

*Celebrating the silliest and strangest moments from the month in TV*



## INFESTATION OF THE MONTH

Arthur discovers he's sharing his duvet with a bed bug you seriously wouldn't want to bite in Amazon's *The Tick* pilot.



## INTERIOR DECORATION OF THE MONTH

We're not saying Reverse-Flash is obsessing, but owning your own bespoke Barry Allen coffee table is a bit over-the-top.



## CHEMICAL WARFARE OF THE MONTH

When, in *Arrow*, Curtis told Oliver he was silent but violent, Ollie didn't realise Curtis was referring to his botty burps.



## VISUAL EUPHEMISM OF THE MONTH

Spaceship Lucy gets a body in *Killjoys*, snogs Johnny, and then – literally – feels fireworks going off. Big bang?



## GUTSY PERFORMANCE OF THE MONTH

*American Horror Story* puts a whole new spin on bowel movements, with a traditional fireside disembowelling.



## COWBOY OPTICIAN OF THE MONTH

There's only one piece of advice you can give this guy in *Fear The Walking Dead*: should have gone to Specsavers.



## MEDICAL EXAMINATION OF THE MONTH

*Once Upon A Time*'s Emma is telling Hook, "They look completely different from down here. Did you know they were different sizes?"



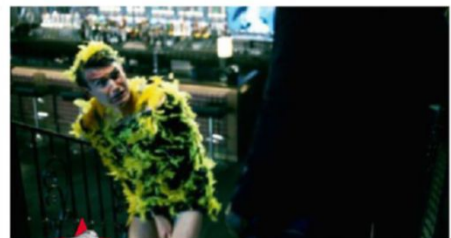
## UNEXPECTED GUEST STAR OF THE MONTH

Laurence Llewelyn-Bowen makes his *Gotham* debut...



## ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ALERT OF THE MONTH

Tourists ain't impressed with *Westworld*'s pizza restaurant.



## PLUCKING IDIOT OF THE MONTH

Big Bird comes off worse in a tussle with Maze in *Lucifer*.



# DISCOVER THE MOST TALKED ABOUT SPACE OPERA OF THE YEAR

'AMONG THE MOST SIGNIFICANT WORKS OF  
SCIENCE FICTION RELEASED IN RECENT YEARS'

TOR.COM

'SWEEPINGLY  
AMBITIOUS'

- SCIFINOW

'SPACE OPERA  
LIKE YOU'VE  
NEVER SEEN IT  
BEFORE'

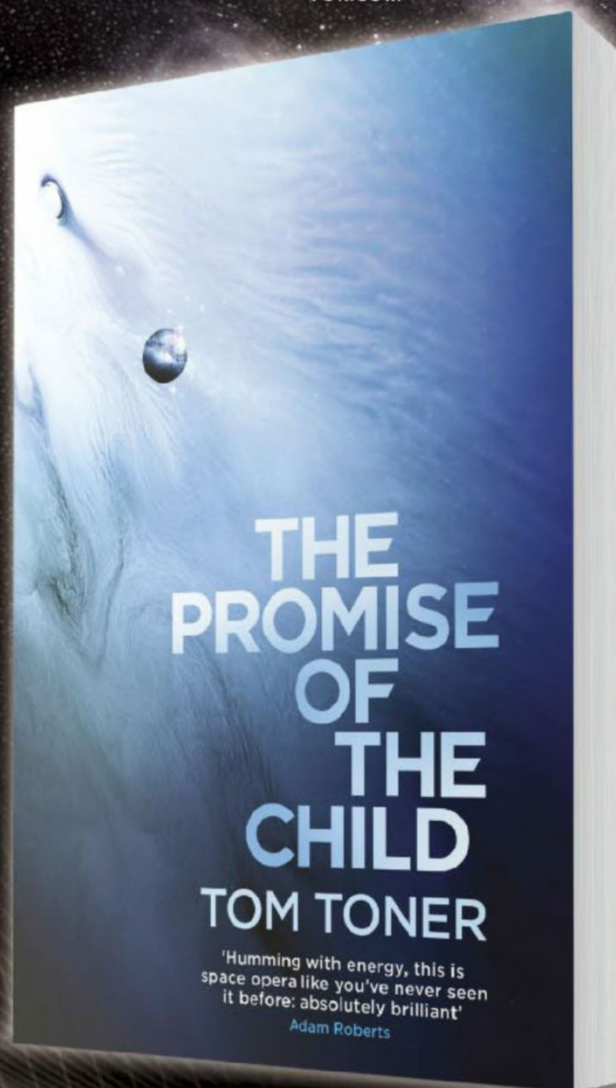
- ADAM ROBERTS

'A TREMENDOUS  
ADVENTURE'

- KARL SCHROEDER

'MARVELOUS'

- PAUL DI FILIPPO, LOCUS



'COULD DEVELOP A  
CULT FOLLOWING'

- BOOKLIST REVIEW

'COMPELLING  
AND ADDICTIVE'

- WILL MCINTOSH

'... BY FAR THE MOST  
EXCITING NEW  
SF WRITER IN A  
LONG TIME'

- FANTASYBOOKCRITIC

'TRULY WONDROUS'

- FOR WINTER NIGHTS

'PREPARE TO GET YOUR MIND BLOWN...  
ONE OF MY FAVOURITE BOOKS OF THE YEAR'

- SFF WORLD



OUT NOW IN PAPERBACK, EBOOK AND AUDIO DOWNLOAD

READ THE FIRST CHAPTER AT: [WWW.GOLLANCZ.CO.UK](http://WWW.GOLLANCZ.CO.UK)

FOLLOW @TOM\_TONER ON TWITTER



# SEQUELS

Hollywood can't get enough of sequels – and nor can we!

Quizmaster Russell Lewin, Production Editor

## QUESTION 1

In *Superman II* Terence Stamp of course played General Zod. But who played his pal Non?

## QUESTION 2

What book does Ash trap his hand under in *Evil Dead II*?

## QUESTION 3

What was the name of the 1991 sequel to *Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure*?

## QUESTION 4

Which science fiction writer asked for his name to be removed from the credits of *Halloween III: Season Of The Witch*?

## QUESTION 5 PICTURE QUESTION

Name this 1988 sequel to a heartwarming 1985 sci-fi fantasy.

## QUESTION 6

How many years were there between *The Wizard Of Oz* and *Return To Oz*? (Within three scores a point.)

## QUESTION 7

In *Back To The Future Part II* what number *Jaws* film is showing?

## QUESTION 8

In *Spider-Man 2*, what does Doctor Octopus throw through the window of the café when Peter and Mary Jane are about to kiss?

## QUESTION 9

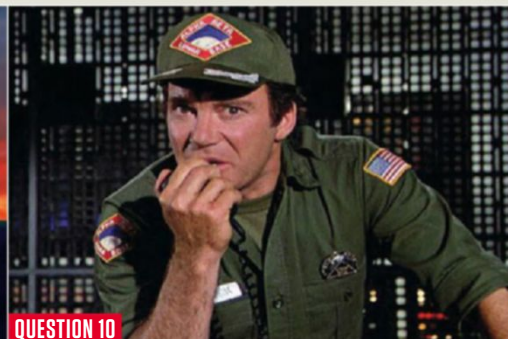
Which two titans of terror finally clashed in a 2003 horror film directed by Ronny Yu?

## QUESTION 10 PICTURE QUESTION

What is this here film that Lord Shatner is appearing in?



QUESTION 5



QUESTION 10



QUESTION 11



QUESTION 20

## QUESTION 11 PICTURE QUESTION

Who's this fella, who's going to be getting a sequel to his 2012 hit?

## QUESTION 12

True or false: after *Mad Max 2* had been renamed *The Road Warrior* and become a hit, *Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome* was known as *The Road Warrior 2* in the United States.

## QUESTION 13

What comes up if you type "the one with the whales" into Google?

## QUESTION 14

Which horror film character, who has so far been in seven films, was "In Space" in the fourth film and "In The Hood" in the fifth film?



## QUESTION 15

Back in 1935, who played the Bride of Frankenstein?

## QUESTION 16

Who directed *RoboCop 2* back in 1990? (It turned out to be his last film.)

## QUESTION 17

What Freddy Krueger film does Robert Englund claim is his favourite?

## QUESTION 18

What 1988 animated feature, executive produced by Steven Spielberg and George Lucas, spawned a remarkable 12 numbered, straight-to-video sequels, the first in 1994, the last in 2007?

## QUESTION 19

After hanging up Tarzan's loin cloth, whose khaki kecks did Johnny Weissmuller climb into for 13 feature films?

## QUESTION 20 PICTURE QUESTION

Here's a nice picture of Julie Andrews as Mary Poppins. But what's the title of the new sequel that is set to hit cinema screens in 2018?

**Answers**  
1 Jack O'Halloran 2 A Farewell To Arms 3 Bill & Ted's Bogus Journey 4 Nigel Kneale 5 Cocoon: The Return 6 Fred and Jason 7 1985 8 A car 9 Freddy and Jason 10 Airplane II: The Sequel 11 Ralph 12 False 13 Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home 14 Leprechaun 15 Elsa Lanchester 16 Irvin Kershner 17 Wes Craven's New Nightmare (1994) 18 The Land Before Time 19 Jungle Jim 20 Mary Poppins Returns

## How did you do?

Are you a turkey or a high-flyer?



→ 0-5  
Superman IV



→ 6-10  
The Fly II



→ 11-15  
Indiana Jones And The Temple Of Doom



→ 16-19  
Toy Story II



→ 20  
Back To The Future Part II



# Total Recall

Personal recollections of cherished sci-fi



## THE BEATLES CARTOON

Russell Lewin, Production Editor

**T**here's oxygen and there's The Beatles. Both have been vital to my survival.

But before we begin I probably need to make my case. What is a piece on pop group The Beatles' 1965-1967 animated TV series doing in sci-fi magazine *SFX*? Short answer: lots of it is sci-fi! Okay, it's mainly in that sort of wacky, detached-reality, junior cartoon show kind of way, but consider the following summaries of what happens in some episodes:

John is kidnapped by a mad scientist who wants the Beatle's brain for his monster; Ringo wanders into the woods in Transylvania where he meets a witch; Paul gets kidnapped by "Professor Psycho" who wants him to marry his creation, Vampiress, half girl and half bat; John is shrunk after going for a swim in a pond with potion in. And much more. Including the band taking a trip 23 billion miles from Earth with a beautiful female alien.

I wasn't watching these shows back in the '60s – I'm not *that* old! I didn't even discover them until 2009, more than 20 years after my Beatles obsession proper started in 1987. But when it became clear to me that I *had* to see them I dashed to eBay, where I bought two bootleg



discs with all 39 episodes on them (there has, to date, been no official DVD release of the series, sadly).

Each episode, although created in a hurry by rushed creatives, is full of delight – goofy, light-hearted and freewheeling – hurling us back to the most glorious decade of them all, which was reigned over by the most glorious band of them all.

The Beatles were always entwined with the fantastic: three of their five films – *Help!*, *Magical Mystery Tour* and *Yellow Submarine* – have strong fantasy elements (particularly *Submarine*, natch); promotional films such as "Strawberry Fields Forever" and "Free As A Bird" utilise a dreamlike palette; and of course songs like "Lucy In The Sky With Diamonds", "I Am The Walrus" and "Tomorrow Never Knows" are fully immersed in a wondrous psychedelic fug. Plasticine porters with looking-glass ties, indeed.

So this animated series is just another part of the remarkable creative explosion that the Fab Four bestowed upon the world – and that includes the world of sci-fi and fantasy. ●

*Russell dug the new *Eight Days A Week* film last month.*

### FactAttack!

→ The show was produced by American Al Brodax (now aged 90!), who went on to produce the classic *Yellow Submarine* film in 1968.

→ Apple Corps bought the rights to the series in the '90s, meaning a DVD release could be a possibility. Let's hope so, along with *Let It Be*.

→ The series didn't have its debut on British television until 1980 when it featured on early morning TV on Granada, and not in full till 1988.

→ Each episode has four songs in it – two are part of the story, two are "singalongs", often used more than once in the series.

SEE YOU  
NEXT MONTH!  
**7 DEC**  
DETAILS ON  
PAGE 43





# STAR WARS ROGUE ONE VFX EXCLUSIVE

Take out a risk free, no-obligation trial of the 3D World digital edition and download your first digital issue for free!

- **Pay less per issue**
- **Download the latest issue instantly**
- **Choose to download issues automatically**
- **Fully-interactive video tutorials and guides**

## TRY IT FOR FREE

Download the 3D World app on your Apple or Android device and start your trial today!



[www.apple.co/2eaVUq4](http://www.apple.co/2eaVUq4)

[www.bit.ly/3dworld-digital](http://www.bit.ly/3dworld-digital)

[www.bit.ly/tdw-zinio](http://www.bit.ly/tdw-zinio)



TOTAL GEAR  
TOTAL TECHNIQUE  
TOTAL INSPIRATION

# TOTAL Guitar

PLAY BETTER NOW!

ON  
SALE  
NOW!



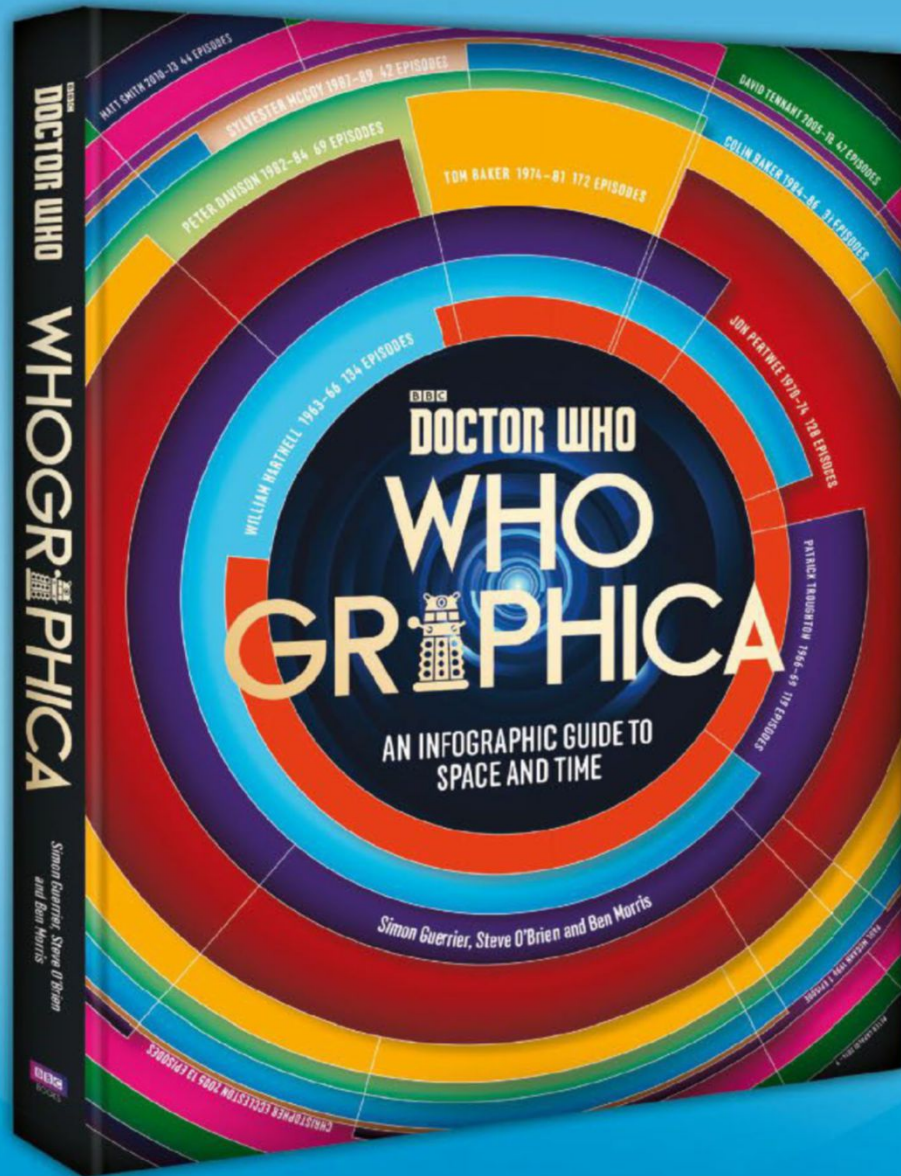
Get the new look issue from [myfavouritemagazines.co.uk](http://myfavouritemagazines.co.uk)





Explore the rich and peculiar history of **Doctor Who**  
through infographics, charts, maps – and more!

A book  
more  
colourful  
than  
Tom  
Baker's  
scarf...



...and  
more  
clever  
than  
Osgood

>>> OUT NOW <<<





# FOR THE LOVE OF SCI-FI

DECEMBER 3RD & 4TH 2016

BOWLERS, LONGBRIDGE RD, TRAFFORD PARK, MANCHESTER, M17 1SN



**HUNDREDS OF PROPS, COSTUMES, VEHICLES AND ACTORS FROM THE MOVIES & TV SHOWS YOU LOVE PLUS ICONIC MOVIE SOUNDTRACKS PERFORMED LIVE BY THE PICCADILLY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**



# FOR THE LOVE OF COMICS

DECEMBER 3RD & 4TH 2016

BOWLERS, LONGBRIDGE RD, TRAFFORD PARK, MANCHESTER, M17 1SN

**COMIC ARTISTS & WRITERS WILL BE SKETCHING & SIGNING ALL WEEKEND!**

**MEET THE WRITERS, ILLUSTRATORS, LETTERISTS, COLOURISTS AND STORYBOARD ARTISTS THAT HAVE BROUGHT SOME OF THE MOST ICONIC CHARACTERS TO LIFE IN THE PAST 40 YEARS**



LIKE US FOR MORE GUEST & ATTRACTION ANNOUNCEMENTS [FACEBOOK.COM/FTLOFSCI-FI](https://www.facebook.com/ftlofscifi)

**TICKETS NOW ON SALE AT FORTHELOVEOFSCI-FI.COM**



**1 TICKET GRANTS YOU ENTRY TO THIS ENTIRE EVENT**



FOR THE LOVE OF SCI-FI CONVENTION IS NOT AUTHORISED BY OR CONNECTED WITH ANY OTHER FILM OR PRODUCTION COMPANY. WE ARE AN INDEPENDENT FAN CONVENTION.